

Time flies at Café the Plaza

Eighteen years of fun and still going strong



ORANJESTAD - What makes one bar a success story and the other one a tale of woe and sorrow? The owners of Café the Plaza, Hans Nooter

and Harry Koeman, say that it is partly a matter of luck, of making the right decisions at the right time, but that it also involves know-how and

a certain amount of daring. The Café the Plaza concept is a winner: a nice bar and restaurant, where you can eat and drink at very reasonable prices, where the service is good and the atmosphere relaxed and friendly. On October 6, 1989, Hans and Harry started their adventure. After eighteen years Café the Plaza it might be nice to look back at the early days of the popular café at Harbortown, as the Renaissance Marketplace was called at the time. Hans Nooter came to Aruba on a holiday in 1989, but he flew back to the island later that year to try and find a job. That was not hard: he found one as a barman at The Paddock, located at where the Plaza Supermarket used to be. Harry Koeman, who had been on the island one year already, was working at the airport restaurant. The two became fast friends, and they soon realized that there was room for another bar on the island, one of their own. And before they knew it they were driving around, looking for a good spot to start a new place. Harbour Town was the first downtown shopping centers



on the island. The Plaza was flanked by The Crazy Lobster on one side and Portobello Restaurant on the other. Both restaurants were always filled with guests, but The Plaza of Erik Koenders was not doing a brisk trade at all. So when Hans and Harry put themselves forward as future tenants, the deal was sealed. Funds came from a good friend, the key to the place was handed over on October 1 and with the help of an astounding number of volunteers, who worked their tails off, Café the Plaza opened its doors on October 6. A major change had taken place.

The former bar and restaurant used to be painted black, with lots of strange white

and gold flowers; there were plastic tables and chairs on the terrace. Not trendy, not cozy, not inviting. Under the new rule everything got a fresh coat of paint and a new interior emerged.

The Dutch-style menu, the first on the island, was a big hit from the beginning. The excellent service came from Miloeshka and Natasha, two Aruban sisters with big smiles and quite a few terrific other waiters.

The first happenings at Café the Plaza were incredible: virtually everyone came! The first New Herring, flown in by KLM, was a huge success: 1500 herrings were sold in just 4 hours.

Continued on Page 6



CHOCOLATE, CARAMEL AND COOKIE
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Havana Nines opens at Paseo Herencia



PALM BEACH - After much anticipation, Havana Nines opened at Paseo Herencia this past weekend, immediately receiving a large crowd of

locals and island visitors who were attracted to the contemporary line of clothing with Cuban influences, perfect for those who like to dress



elegantly. Debra Mansur, Managing Director, reports that visitors at the concept store fell in love with the collection of linen-based resort-wear featuring the guayabera, in a stylish and contemporary interpretation, as well as the shirts, vintage Cuban-themed tees, drawstrings pants & hats, in sizes S to XXXL. The store's female visitors also had plenty to choose from, with Havana Nines offering an extensive collection of very attractive, sexy and cool clothing for women.

The Havana Nines look caught on like fire in Miami, as there is now an increased interest in Latino culture among all demographics, and the appeal of guayaberas, Cuban cigars and Mojitos is universal.

The style of clothing offered by Havana Nines relates directly to that Miami-Beach retro-feel and mixes the glamour and suaveness of Cuba with an upbeat, fun lifestyle.

The line enjoys an avid fan-base among professionals who enjoy great day time looks that could also last them into the night.



Upon entering the store, visitors are immediately treated to the island feel, with the shop's décor featuring espresso wood, crisp white lines and mojito

green walls. Photos show the newly opened Havana Nines concept store at Paseo Herencia. □



Aruba's longtime Visitors honored at Marriott



PALM BEACH - Recently Miss Cheryl Talcof as well as Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Sipple were honored as Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba, meanwhile Mr. & Mrs. Rick Knoof and Miss Lillian Talcof who is 91 years old were honored as Distinguished Visitors to the Island of Aruba.



the Knoof couple coming for the last 10 years.

The certificate ceremony took place at the Aruba Marriott Ocean Club where all these guests were staying. They all also added that they wouldn't change their destination for no other. Present at the ceremony were Marriott's Ocean Club General Manager Corey Guest and Rayon Koolman representing the ATA office.



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Dutch Antilles to be dismantled by 2010

The joint Dutch and Antillean governments have decided that the Netherlands Antilles will cease to exist as a country within the Kingdom of the Netherlands by 10 October 2010.

In a meeting on Curaçao, the islands of Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba agreed to become Dutch municipalities. On the same date, 10-10-10, Curaçao and the Dutch half of St Maarten will become independent countries within the Kingdom, on an equal footing with the European Netherlands and with Aruba,

which gained its "status aparte" in 1986. The other half of St Maarten remains French.

The previous semi-independence arrangement between the Dutch national government and its former Caribbean colonies dated from 1954 and was due for renewal.

The Netherlands' Deputy Interior Minister Ank Bijleveld warned that a lot of work remains to be done following Wednesday's Curaçao agreement. The parliaments



in The Hague and Willemstad, Curaçao, need to pass a number of laws, and administrative bodies for Curaçao and St Maarten need to be founded.

The Dutch government also wants assurances that rampant crime on Curaçao and St

Maarten will be fought harder. Dutch police detectives will continue to be active in the kingdom's new countries.

Also on Wednesday, Deputy Finance Minister Kees de Jager said that the Tax Office is about to target people who

have money stashed away in accounts with the First Curaçao International Bank, which he called "a transaction point for very substantial payments". Some 100 Dutch account holders there will be asked to explain where their money came from. □

Tax office targets Curacao savers

The tax office is to ask several hundred Dutch nationals with money in the First Curacao International Bank to explain where the cash came from, news agency ANP reports on Thursday.

Details of Dutch account holders came to light following a tax office investigation into the bank, whose management are suspected of money laundering and tax fraud.

The bank is said to be the centre of 'millions of transactions with a combined transaction value of €900bn', the finance ministry was quoted as saying.

That research led to the identification of some 6,000 bank account holders, mainly foundations and trusts, but also private individuals who are liable for Dutch tax. They will all now be contacted, the ministry said. □



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Distinguished Visitors honored at Amsterdam Manor



EAGLE BEACH - Recently George Earney & Jackie Smith as well as Laureen & Alfred Pizzimento were honored at the Amsterdam Manor Beach Resort by the Aruba Tourism Authority as Distinguished Visitors. The Earney - Smith couple has been coming to the Island consecutively for the last 10 years and the Pizzimento's for the last 19

years consecutively. Yesterday was also a very special day for the Pizzimento couple for both being honored as good will ambassadors to the Island of Aruba and them celebrating their 43rd wedding anniversary. The certificate ceremony took place at the Amsterdam Manor Beach Resort, both couples have visited many



places around the world but still consider Aruba as one of their premier destination. They both also commented that Aruba is like their second home away from home, and that all the people of Aruba are so

friendly and nice, which is one of the reasons they keep coming back year after year. Throughout the years they have brought many family members to the Island so that they can also see where paradise is. Present

at the ceremony were Mr. Ricardo Emerencia as well as Miss. Janine Croes of the Amsterdam Manor resort and Rayon Koolman representing the Aruba Tourism Authority office

hunkemöller

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CAFE THE PLAZA

Continued from Front Page
Lies (still working at Café the Plaza) wore a Volendams costume and she was the hit of the night, together with the raw herrings. In the following years quite a few traditions were installed: the New Year's Cocktail party for clients, a sweaty, happy affair, the annual Polesitting Championships, the tennis Plaza Open, the

Plaza Golf, the waiter race, the quiz nights, the staff soccer games and of course the enormously popular World Cup and European Cup soccer matches, when everyone is dressed up in the orange colors of the Dutch national team. Thirteen screens, outside bars and an out-of-this-world ambiance are synonymous with Café the Plaza at international soccer events.

The Elfstedentocht, written up in the media in Holland, was hilariously funny: teams had to negotiate an eleven-bar trajet, wearing flippers, snorkels and goggles. They got a stamp at every bar and had a drink there. The bars had Frisian names for the occasion and back at The Plaza, participants had to swim through ice-cold water (a hole in the ice, so to speak), to the finish line. The Elfstedentocht was a major highlight in the bar's history.

Café the Plaza, Hans and Harry and all their 'regulars' and friends: we wish you 'masha pabien' with your 18th anniversary. Everyone is invited to come celebrate this special happening on October 3rd with games for kids in the afternoon and live music as well as herrings in the evening. □



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Aruba Wine and Dine Staff Party was a super wet and wild event



RANCHO DAIMARI - The staff party of Aruba Wine and Dine was a most animated affair, which included the overcoming of obstacles, small and large, games and a wet finale. The 200-plus AWD employees first had to negotiate the very challenging road to Rancho Daimari before they could enjoy a fantastic barbecue and drinks. But relaxing was not the idea this time, as all employees were put to work playing games.

Activity masters Sjoerd de Vries and Jochem Ros of Active Events had everyone tugging at ropes, walking on skis and even a game of coconut head bashing.

The maintenance staffers, however, had a great idea of their own: they showed no mercy and dunked everyone in the pool, including AWD Owner Harry Koeman. The fun continued until the



afternoon came to an end

and the party goers had to go home: not as easy as it sounds, as driving on the terrible road proved to be a game not everyone could

win!

A lot of towing was involved, but finally all AWD employees reached their homes safe and sound.



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PALM BEACH - There is only one Bugaloe on Aruba: it is the hottest place to be cool and the coolest place to be hot.

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People from all over the world get together at Bugaloe: they have a few drinks, a bite to eat, they dance and sway and make new friends. If you have gotten curious here and now, check out the website www.bugaloe.com and you will see at one glance what we are talking about. No words will be needed anymore. Surf to the website for the Bugaloe Event Calendar or leave a note in the Guestbook.



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Bugaloe is located at De Palm Pier in Palm Beach between RIU Palace and Radisson Resort.

Bugaloe's daily Happy Hours are considered the starting signal for an evening of partying on the island. Locals mingle with visitors and raise their glasses. When you get hungry, order a scrumptious burger, a gourmet pizza, tasty wings or a salad and party on.

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Friday 6-10pm: PM Band

Friday 10pm - 12am - DJ Jeroen

Sunday 6-9pm: MARISELA & Aquarius

Aruba Music Festival 2009

FONSECA to perform on Aruba



ORANJESTAD - Aruba is excited to have Fonseca join the Aruba Music Festival that will be held next weekend October 8 & 9. Fonseca's EMI Latin United States debut *Corazon* is amongst the most impressive releases in recent Latin music, instantly garnering three Latin Grammy nominations, four Latin Billboard Nominations, two MTV Latin America Music Award nominations and four Premio Lo Nuestro nominations (at which he also performed). From these nominations, Fonseca took home a Latin Grammy for Best Tropical Song of the Year, a Latin Billboard Award for Tropical Album of the Year, a MTV Music Award for Best New Central Artist, and a Premio Lo Nuestro for Best New Artist. In 2008, Fonseca was nominated for two Premio Lo Nuestro Awards for Tropical Male Artist of the Year and Tropical Traditional Artist of the Year. He released his highly-anticipated sophomore album *Gratitud* and first hit single "Enredame" which was #1 in Columbia for nine consecutive weeks. Most recently, his second single "Arroyito" was released and within two weeks hit the #1 spot in Columbia.

By staying true to his native Colombian rhythms and fusing pop/rock, Fonseca manages to straddle and dominate both the Pop and Tropical charts, uniquely positioning him as both a Pop and Tropical star. Fonseca's album and mega hit *Te Mando Flores* reached top 10 spots on the Latin Album, Pop, Tropical, and Hot Latin Tracks charts. Over a year past its release, *Te Mando Flores* is still on significant rotation at radio stations. His follow-up hit single "Hance Tiempo" also slated both the Latin Pop and Tropical Airplay charts. Fonseca has additionally shared the stage with fellow Colombian luminaries Juanes at Campin Stadium in Bogota and Shakira in her home town of Baranquilla. □



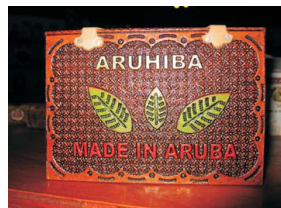
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ORANJESTAD- Benjamin Petrocchi started the newest export product of Aruba, locally produced cigars called "Aruhiba". These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba.



Petrocchi has always had an interest in the cigar business and has also sold Premium Cuban Cigars, and now he is growing his own tobacco crop. After many attempts and trips to Santo Domingo and Cuba he started his own production and cultivation of Aruhiba Cigars in Aruba. The process took ten years. Petrocchi dedication to the cigars is important for the molding and process of making a perfect cigar which takes a long time. The cigar box is specially designed for the cigars with the logo "Aruhiba". Petrocchi considers Aruhiba a promotion for Aruba through fine quality cigars. The company sells International cigars as well. Buy a gift box of Aruhiba Corona with five cigars and you will get 1 FREE cigar of \$35. Located at the Historic Dutch Windmill. Open on Sunday from 9am to 8pm. And also at Tamarijn Hotel open from 9am to 1pm. Aruhiba is only available in above mentioned stores. Visit our authentic tobacco farm where cigars are handmade.



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Aruba TODAY

JUST SAY NO TO DRUGS

October 9 & 10 for the Aruba Music Festival

Earth, Wind & Fire to perform in Aruba

ORANJESTAD - The Aruba Tourism Authority announced that the legendary band Earth, Wind & Fire will perform at the 8th Annual Aruba Music Festival to be held October 9 & 10. Earth, Wind & Fire is simply one of the most important, innovative, and celebrated contemporary Pop/R&B music forces of the 20th century. The band has had a remarkable career spanning over four decades with accolades, awards and record-breaking achievements. Earth, Wind & Fire's signature sound is not easily categorized and since its inception has been profoundly influential... musically, socially, and spiritually.

The musical vision has fused Pop, R&B, Rock, Latin, Funk, Jazz, and African Music into one unique sound. Successfully breaking all musical genre boundaries with 23 albums, Earth, Wind & Fire have recorded eight #1 R&B singles and eight Double Platinum Top 10 Pop Albums over their career.

Earth, Wind & Fire have received 20 Grammy Award nominations and have won six awards as a group; additionally its founding members individually (Maurice White & Philip Bailey) have each won two, totaling eight Grammy Awards. In 2004, Earth, Wind & Fire received the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences (N.A.R.A.S.) Signature Governor's Award.

They have earned more than 50 Gold and Platinum albums and have sold over 90 million albums worldwide earning them a place on the list of best selling music artists of all time. VH1 ranked Earth, Wind & Fire number 60 on their list of the 100 Greatest Artists of Rock & Roll. Rolling Stone Magazine declared the group "changed the sound of black pop."

President Obama invited Earth, Wind & Fire to

perform in the East Room at the White House for the first social event of the new administration. Earth, Wind & Fire made international news when President Obama declared in an interview with Rolling Stone Magazine that the group was among his favorites. He said they are "rhythm and blues and pop staples for me."

Earth, Wind & Fire's career achievements have been acknowledged and earned them their place in musical history. Earth, Wind & Fire have been inducted into Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (2000); they have received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame (1995) and Hollywood's Rockwalk (2003). That same year they received the Vocal Group Hall of Fame Award (2003). The music industry and fans have bestowed Lifetime Achievement honors from ASCAP (Rhythm & Soul Heritage Award - 2002), NAACP (Hall of Fame - 1994) and the BET Awards (Lifetime Achievement Award 2002). Two Earth, Wind & Fire classic songs have been inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame: "That's The Way of The World" (2004) and "Shining Star" (2007). Earth, Wind & Fire have 12 American Music Awards nominations and four awards and the group received the Entertainer Award at the 2009 TV Land Awards.

Earth, Wind & Fire are the first African-American performers to sell out Madison Square Garden and to receive the MSG Gold Ticket Award. Earth, Wind & Fire is the first African-American group to receive the Columbia Records Crystal Globe Award for selling the most albums internationally. The principals of Earth, Wind & Fire: Philip Bailey, Verdine White, and Ralph Johnson have received honorary doctorate degrees from the Arts & Media College at Columbia College

in Chicago. Co-Founders Philip Bailey and Maurice White have earned honorary doctorate degrees at Berklee College of Music.

The group's Grammy Awards have exemplified Earth, Wind & Fire's relevance and the connection with contemporary R&B and Pop artists by showcasing the group twice in the 2005 and 2007 television event. The musical highlight at the 2005 broadcast was Earth, Wind & Fire joining forces with Outkast, in what was the Hip Hop group's last television appearance together. In 2007, Earth, Wind & Fire performed on the Grammys with the top nominees Ludacris and Mary J. Blige in a heartfelt poignant message to raise the social consciousness of teenage run-aways.

Many of today's contemporary Grammy Award winning music artists have named Earth, Wind & Fire as their musical influence or have announced that they are die hard fans, including: Beyonce, Usher and Prince (he thanked Earth, Wind & Fire in his induction acceptance speech at the British Hall of Fame). Alicia Keys proclaims that Earth, Wind & Fire is "the best band ever." Mary J. Blige has shown her appreciation to the band by re-recording one of the band's hit songs "Imagination." Miles Davis described Earth, Wind & Fire as his "all time favorite band" saying "they have everything (horns, electric guitar, singers, and more) in one band" Quincy Jones has proclaimed himself to be the "biggest fan of Earth, Wind & Fire since day one."

The Black Eyed Peas took the stage with Earth, Wind & Fire for a performance at the Super Bowl XXIX, and then an encore by opening the 57th Annual Primetime Emmy Awards together.

Earth, Wind & Fire's songs have been covered by recording artists Jerry



Garcia Band, Point of Grace, D'Angelo, Lenny White, Patti LaBelle, The Manhattans, Wynonna Judd, Yoland Adams, Incognito, Chaka Khan, Dionne Warwick, the Vienna Boys choir, Herb Albert, Musiq and Tito Puente.

Their songs have also been sampled by numerous artists some of which include: A Tribe Called Quest, Wyclef Jean, Jay-Z, Amerie, The Fugees, LL Cool J, De La Soul, Common, Quenn Pen, Naughty by Nature, P. Diddy, The Roots, Will Smith, Cee-Lo, Mc Lyte and Lisa Left Eye Lopes. Music artist who name Earth, Wind & Fire as a major influence or inspiration include Usher, william, Mary J Blige, Cherish, Prince, Pharrell Williams, The Neptunes, Jon Secada, Wyclef Jean, Common, Phil Collins, Boney James, Angie Stone, The All American Rejects, Jesse McCartney, Mint Condition, Solange, Babyface, Outkast, Jamiroquai, Marcus Miller, Omarion, Eric Benet, Sheila E., Erykah Badu, Jamie Foxx, Fall Out Boy, Meshell Ndegeocello, Wynton Marsalis, and Mario.

In keeping with the group's spiritual legacy the very principals of which the group was founded and derived its name from, Earth, Wind & Fire has stood for and profoundly believes in the circle of returning the benefits of success by giving back through supporting the continuation of raising funds

and the consciousness of important social issues.

The Inaugural 2005 Grammy Jam charity event honored Earth, Wind & Fire. The benefit event that was supported by Stevie Wonder, william, Indie Arie, Usher and Kanye West performing classic Earth, Wind & Fire hit songs. Fans in the audience, including Prince, were mesmerized. Proceeds from the evening went to many non-profit organizations: The GRAMMY Foundation, California State Summer School for the Arts, the Los Angeles Chapter Scholarship Program, the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), and For The Arts. The group's founders have instituted charitable programs that have a direct endowment to local and national music and arts initiatives. Philip Bailey started the organization called Music is Unity Foundation and Verdine White introduced Wright Life Arts Center for the Youth. Earth, Wind & Fire appeared and performed on the first American Idol Gives back special. The program raised money and awareness with the effect of poverty on children and young people in the US and Africa.

Earth, Wind, & Fire remains to this day a top musical phenomenon with a catalog of mega-hits spanning over forty years. Their influences have changed the course of music and perhaps the spiritual consciousness around the world. □

You are invited

Aruba celebrates International Animal Day

On October 4th 2009



ORANJESTAD - October 4th, International Animal Day will be celebrated worldwide. Once more Philip Merryweather opens his doors to the people of Aruba so everyone can

come and enjoy the day with his exotic animals.

There will be a great variety of interesting animals to be admired and also activities for children such as pony



ride, dino jump, face painting and also the public will have the opportunity to feed the animals.

Everybody is invited to come on October 3 & 4, from 11 am to 7pm, to enjoy the day with the animals. Entrance fee Afls. 3,00. □



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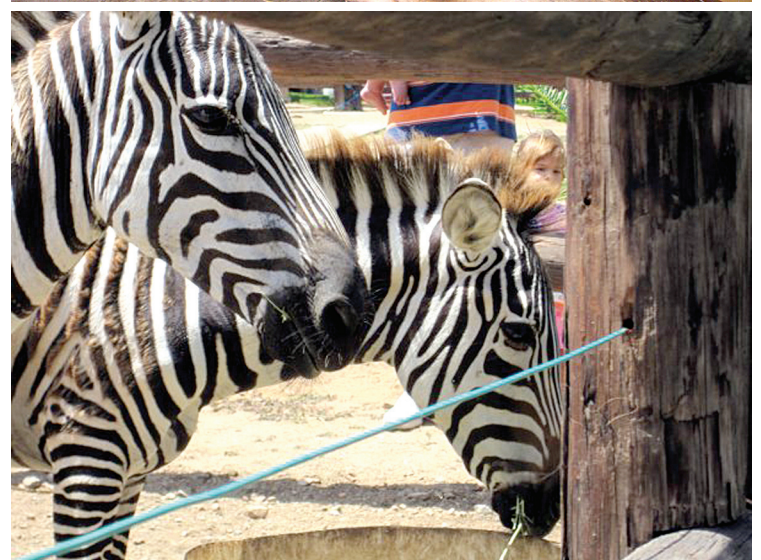
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Place: Alto Vista 116 For more info. call @ 5935363



Police stop students, inspect bags for weapons and drugs

~ In school bus checks ~

CUL DE SAC--Police stopped nearly five dozen school buses and checked students for weapons and drugs Wednesday morning in renewed efforts to stop crime from entering schools.

They found machetes, scissors and marijuana.

Police, Voluntary Corps of St. Maarten VKS, and Control Unit officers stopped buses headed to the South Reward-St. Peters-Cul de Sac school district, escorted students out and inspected their bags.

Officers seized three machetes, six pairs of scissors, a flare gun, and a knife from students in the controls. At least one student was found with a pornographic magazine, police said.

It was the police's latest attempt to stop crime and violence in and around the largest concentration of schools in Dutch St. Maarten. Police had tried patrolling schools after classes ended earlier in the school year to ensure fights didn't break out. Henson said police had controlled the area to counter the "ongoing and increasing number of senseless fights between rival groups of youngsters and the carrying of weapons and or drugs into these areas."

Police found a student using a bag to carry drugs and money. Instead of books and pens the student, who was identified only as M.F.W., had a small plastic bag with marijuana and US \$90 in cash. Police detained him took away the money and drugs, and called his parents to the station.

"[W.] was reprimanded and the parents were advised to pay better attention to their child," police spokesman Inspector Ricardo Henson said in a written statement. "The student was then allowed to leave with his parents."

Police said students seemed to agree with their approach to combating crime. □

10-10-10 for Country St. Maarten

WILLEMSTAD--St. Maarten and Curaçao will become separate countries within the Dutch Kingdom on October 10, 2010, and this date is irrevocable.

This is the agreement reached in the Kingdom Political Steering Group meeting held in the World Trade Center in Curaçao on Wednesday.

However, while this date of 10-10-10 on which the Netherlands Antilles will officially cease to exist is irrevocable, the two new countries will be subjected to conditions should they not meet certain agreed criteria such as getting their Justice systems, police and good governance in order and up to acceptable levels.

Should the imposition of such conditions become necessary, a ministerial committee comprising the prime minister of the new country, the Dutch Minister/State Secretary for Kingdom Relations and the Minister responsible for the deficient area will be established to overlook the progress of any improvement plan. This committee will have a lifespan of two years with a possible extension for another two years.

Assistance from the Dutch Government to get these areas up to speed will be given where necessary.

Already, due to insufficient progress in the justice system, a main concern of the Dutch, the island territories have agreed that the Kingdom Detective Cooperation Team RST will continue to work along with the local police forces to fight organised and cross-border crimes until the new joint

police cooperation team is in place.

St. Maarten's Leader of Government Constitutional Affairs Commissioner William Marlin could not disguise his satisfaction with the outcome of Wednesday's meeting. He said St. Maarten had finally achieved its goal to become a country within the kingdom as voted for in the June 23, 2000, referendum, after more than nine years of hard work.

He praised his delegation members – opposition Democratic Party leader Island Councilwoman Sarah Wescot-Williams, Finance Commissioner Xavier Blackman and the team of advisors – for their respective roles in accomplishing this goal.

But Marlin was careful to stress that the pinning down of a date for the attainment of country status was by no means the end of the road in the process. There is still much more work to be done to build up St. Maarten, Marlin told a press conference Wednesday night.

One area is putting the infrastructure in place to receive the decentralised tasks from the Central Government that should begin in earnest as of January 2010 with the passing of the decentralisation law. The budgeted amounts for these tasks will also be transferred to the islands along with the new responsibilities.

Dutch State Secretary for Kingdom Relations Ank Bijleveld-Schouten has pledged support from the Dutch Government to get St. Maarten's infrastructure ready in advance for the date of the new status. Assistance

will also come from the Central Government because, unlike Curaçao which is set to inherit the operations of the Central Government, St. Maarten has to build most of its ministries and departments from scratch.

St. Maarten's Project Director for Constitutional Affairs Dennis Richardson will head to the Netherlands in the second week of October to finalise how the Dutch Government can render assistance, particularly financing, to put the infrastructure in place. Marlin said it had seemed at the start of Wednesday's meeting as though no agreement would be reached, but it was good to be in the "final stretch" at the end of the evening. He added that several target dates had been set in the past, but these had never been realised for various reasons. This is the first time a date has been put on paper and signed by all parties.

Additionally, the Consensus Kingdom Laws are making their way through the Antillean Parliament and the Dutch Parliament's Second Chamber, a process that was not ongoing when past target dates were set. There is enough time between now and October 10, 2010, for all laws to be vetted, passed and enacted for the new countries.

Bijleveld-Schouten, Antillean Prime Minister Emily de Jongh-Elhage, Antillean Finance Minister Ersilia de Lannooy and Curaçao Constitutional Affairs Commissioner Zita Jesus-Leito also expressed contentment with the pinning of a date for the attainment of country status. □



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Obese mothers more likely to have babies with heart defects



WASHINGTON (AFP) — Women who were overweight or obese before they became pregnant are significantly more likely to give birth to a baby with a heart defect, a study published Thursday showed.

The risk of having a baby with congenital heart defects was around 18 percent greater if a woman was overweight or obese when she became pregnant than it was among

A pregnant woman receives a prenatal screening. The risk of having a baby with congenital heart defects was around 18 percent greater if a woman was overweight or obese when she became pregnant than it was among normal-weight women, the study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found.

(AFP/File/Joel Robine)

normal-weight women, the study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found. Researchers analyzed data on 6,440 infants with congenital heart defects and 5,673 infants without birth defects for the study, the results of which were published in the American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

Mothers with type 1 or 2 diabetes, which is a strong risk factor for heart defects, were excluded from the study.

Out of 25 types of heart defects that the researchers looked at, 10 were found to be associated with maternal obesity and five with the mother being overweight.

“Congenital heart defects are the most common types of birth defect and among all birth defects they are a leading cause of illness, death and medical expenditures,” Edwin Trevathan, director of the CDC’s National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities, said in a statement.

Two-thirds of American adults are either obese or overweight.

The average American carries 23 superfluous pounds (11 kilos).

Obesity is defined as having a body mass index -- calculated by dividing a person’s weight in kilograms by their height squared in meters -- greater than 30, while the official definition of overweight in women is having a body mass index greater than 27.3.

In health terms, being obese means a person is at greater risk for a whole host of maladies, ranging from high blood pressure to diabetes, heart disease and stroke -- and this study shows that the health risk can be passed on to children. “This provides another reason for women to maintain a healthy weight. In addition to the impact on a woman’s own health and the known pregnancy complications associated with maternal obesity, the baby’s health could be at risk,” said CDC epidemiologist Suzanne Gilboa.

According to a report issued in July, obesity could account for one in six dollars spent on health care by 2030. □

Study Finds Fish Won't Prevent Heart Failure

By Steven Reinberg
HealthDay Reporter

While eating fish does appear to help protect against heart attacks and other cardiovascular disease, a new Dutch study finds it doesn’t seem to guard against the development of heart failure.

Heart failure is a degenerative condition, but with the right treatment and lifestyle people are living longer with it. In fact, some 5.7 million Americans are living with heart failure, and 670,000 new cases are diagnosed each year, according to the American Heart Association.

“We examined whether the intake of fish and its omega-3 fatty acids could protect against the development of heart failure in people who had no history of coronary heart disease,” said lead researcher J. Marianne Geleijnse, an assistant professor of epidemiology at Wageningen University. “However, we found no association except for a possible protective effect of omega-3 fatty acids against heart failure in a subgroup with diabetes.” There is strong evidence for a general cardioprotective effect of omega-3 fatty acids from fish, although the underlying mechanisms are not yet clear, Geleijnse said.

The report is published in the October issue of the European Journal of Heart Failure.

For the study, Geleijnse’s team collected data on 5,299 men and women who participated in the Rotterdam Study. The researchers wanted to see if the omega-3 fatty acids in fish could protect people from developing heart failure as they appear to protect people from other types of heart trouble. □

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BUSINESS

Aruba TODAY



U.S. Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke testifies before the House Financial Services Committee on financial regulatory reform on Capitol Hill in Washington October 1, 2009.

REUTERS/Richard Clement

Bernanke subdued on Fed's consumer protection role

By JEANNINE AVERSA,
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON — Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke told a skeptical Congress Thursday that the central bank is “well suited” to oversee colossal financial companies whose failure could endanger the entire economy.

His written testimony did not mention the Fed losing some of its consumer protection duties, after the Fed chief previously criticized the Obama administration for its plan to strip the central bank of some of those powers.

Testifying before the House Financial Services Committee, Bernanke said only that protecting consumers from abusive practices involving mortgages, credit cards and other financial products is “vitally important.”

In past appearances on Capitol Hill, Bernanke has laid out a spirited defense that the Fed should keep those powers. The administration wants to create a consumer protection agency for risky financial products.

Rep. Melvin Watt, D-N.C., was stunned by what he thought was Bernanke's short shrift to the consumer protection issue. “Five sentences on consumer protection when everything else that we talked about this morning get substantially more space,” Watt said.

“It's just not a good message to send.”

During the hearing, Bernanke conceded that the Fed didn't do the job it should have in protecting consumers, but said improvements are being made. He suggested the central bank could take further steps to strengthen such oversight.

“We are competent and have the skills ... I think we can do that,” he said.

Pressed later to state a position on whether a new consumer agency is needed, Bernanke responded: “I'm not going to tell Congress what to do.”

Bernanke did lay out a case for the additional power over so-called “too big to fail” financial companies, which could include insurance companies, hedge funds and others beyond the big banks traditionally overseen by the Fed. In fielding questions, Bernanke said the “focus” in that regard should remain on financial firms, rather than on other types of companies.

As part of a sweeping rewrite of the nation's financial rule book, the administration has proposed tapping the Fed to regulate those companies, and Bernanke said the central bank has the expertise to best carry out those duties. □

Slide in manufacturing activity sends stocks lower

By TIM PARADIS,
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — Stocks began the fourth quarter on a down note Thursday, falling sharply amid more signs that the economy's recovery will be slow and bumpy.

Major stock indicators fell more than 1 percent after disappointing reports on the manufacturing industry and the labor market overshadowed good news on housing. The Dow Jones industrial average fell 160 points, its biggest slide in a month. Bond prices rose as investors nervously sought a safer place for their money. The Institute for Supply Management said its index of manufacturing activity in September slipped to 52.6 from 52.9 in August, well below analysts' expectations of 54. It was the second month in a row the reading came in above 50, which indicates growth, after contracting for 18 months.

Earlier Thursday, the Labor Department said new claims for jobless benefits rose more than expected to 551,000, evidence that the labor market is still struggling and that jobs remain scarce. Economists polled by Thomson Reuters had predicted claims to rise to 535,000. The increase came after three weeks of declines and a day before the Labor Department's monthly report on employment. Economists expect that the unemployment rate rose to 9.8 percent in September from 9.7 percent in August. Better reports on housing and consumer spending weren't enough to stem the stock market's losses. Several economic reports this week have already raised doubts among investors about the strength of the recovery and whether this year's powerful stock market rally should continue. The Dow



Jones industrial average lost nearly 30 points Wednesday, as a disappointing report on Midwestern manufacturing contributed to the bearish tone.

Despite ending on a wobbly note in September, stocks still put in a stellar third quarter. Both the Dow Jones industrials and the Standard & Poor's 500 index gained 15 percent. It was the Dow's best three-month period since the fourth quarter of 1998.

The slide after a strong quarter wasn't surprising because even bullish analysts and traders have been saying the market and the economy won't be able to mount an unbroken recovery. In part, that's because investors still face big worries about unemployment and consumer spending.

Christian Bendixen, director of technical research at Bay Crest Partners LLC in New York, said recent economic numbers have reminded investors that a recovery in the economy will be difficult.

“For the first time in a while they're coming in a little bit lower than expectations and I think that's scaring a few investors,” he said.

In early afternoon trading, the Dow fell 160.98, or 1.7 percent, to 9,551.30. The drop marked the biggest fall for the Dow since Sept. 1 as investors worried about the health of the

economy drove the Dow down nearly 186 points.

The broader Standard & Poor's 500 index fell 21.40, or 2 percent, to 1,035.68, and the Nasdaq composite index dropped 54.15, or 2.6 percent, to 2,068.27.

The Russell 2000 index of smaller companies fell 15.92, or 2.6 percent, to 588.36.

Five stocks fell for every one that rose on the New York Stock Exchange, where volume came to 691.4 million shares compared with 680.6 million shares traded at the same point Wednesday.

Bond prices rose, a move to be expected given investors' growing anxiety about the economy. The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note, which moves opposite its price, fell to 3.20 percent from 3.31 percent late Wednesday. Darell Krasnoff, managing director of Bel Air Investment Advisors in Los Angeles, said the market had been running too far ahead of the economy and that the mixed data are making some investors uneasy.

“Fear is still very, very fresh in peoples' minds and the magnitude of the potential disaster that we had last September through March, I think still has investor pretty skittish. So our sense is that some bad news can shift sentiment pretty quickly.” □



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Polanski's Hollywood Ending

David Paul Kuhn

Imagine a world where the famous live by separate laws. People are so captivated by fame that they argue for the absolution of, say, a child rapist--so long as that rapist is famous.

Seriously, I'm not kidding. What if a famous film director repeatedly raped a 13-year-old girl? Here's one storyline:

The director flees the United States for a life of European luxury. His fame becomes a shield. He goes on directing major films. He appears on red carpets. Everyone knows where he lives. His name is on his doorbell.

Three decades later, he's arrested. Powerful filmmakers like Martin Scorsese, Woody Allen, David Lynch and Harvey Weinstein demand his release.

Even a strong liberal woman like Whoopi Goldberg, who stars on a show for women, terms this not "rape-rape"--which apparently infers, not really rape. The cofounder of Women Overseas for Equality blogs that this director's arrest overseas, for the unequal circumstances of sexually abusing a girl, is "disgraceful and unjustifiable."

The director has French and Polish citizenship. Top officials from both countries send a formal letter of protest to the American secretary of state.

The French foreign minister terms this arrest "sinister." The French cultural minister terms it "absolutely dreadful," a man "thrown to the lions over an ancient affair that doesn't make any sense." Believe it or not, even the French President, Nicolas Sarkozy, urges a "speedy resolution."

Welcome to the makings of Roman Polanski's "true Hollywood story," to borrow the title from a television channel devoted to celebrity. Polanski directed two exceptional films, Chinatown and The Pianist. His tragic case of moral misdirection occurred in March 1977. He was initially indicted on six felony counts, including rape and sodomy with a child.

A few weeks later, the girl swore in grand jury testimony that Polanski lured her with promises of a high fashion photo shoot. She said he plied her with champagne and part of a Quaalude, convinced her to undress and join him in a Jacuzzi. He undressed, got in and raped her again and again, despite her repeated pleas for him to stop.

In a generous plea deal, which likely would not have been offered to others, Polanski admitted to a felony of "unlawful sexual intercourse with a minor." He also admitted that he knew she was a 13-year-old. This is not a case of mistaken age or an artist pushing the boundaries of the bourgeoisie. He was a 43-year-old man. She was visibly still a child.

On the eve of his sentencing in 1978, he absconded to France. Ever since, Polanski has been a cause célèbre.

One sympathizes with Polanski. He is a Holocaust survivor. He later suffered the murder of his pregnant wife, Sharon Tate, by the Charles Manson family. It's the worst of tragedies combined with a made-in Hollywood tragedy. These circumstances might have lessened his sentence. But context, however dramatic, only informs; it does not change facts. □

2010 Could Easily Be Disastrous For Democrats

Sean Trende

In this week's New Republic, Ed Kilgore writes a piece entitled "Some Revolution: Why The 2010 Election Will Not Be A Repeat Of 1994." The piece is a pretty good summary of arguments I've read concluding that 2010 won't be bad for Democrats. These arguments are worth a closer analysis.

Kilgore concludes that the Democrats' most likely fate for the 2010 midterm elections is a loss of about ten seats. Bear in mind that this would be well below the post-World War II average loss of 24 seats in a midterm. This is well below what non-partisan analysts like Charlie Cook are predicting. In fact, if Republicans only gained ten seats, it would be the eighth worst midterm election for an out-party since the Civil War. I think that such minor losses are highly unlikely. But before getting into what Kilgore's analysis misses, let me say that I really don't purport to know what's going to happen in 2010. It's a bit like trying to predict who will win the 2011 Super Bowl. We can probably say with some certainty it won't be the Detroit Lions, but once you get past perennial bottom dwellers there are too many variables to assign realistic odds (and even then, who knows; witness the turnaround of the Miami Dolphins from 2007 to 2008).

So beyond saying that Republicans will almost certainly not lose another 20 seats, we can't do much in the way of precise predicting right now. But while the optimists may ultimately be correct, they'll be correct in spite of his analysis, not because of it, much like a math student who gets the correct answer, but has numerous errors in his work. So let's go through the main arguments, and see what holds up, and what doesn't.

1. Open Seats Kilgore notes that "[t]wenty-two of the 54 [sic -- Republicans picked up 56 Democratic seats and lost four of their own for a net gain of 52 seats on election night] seats the GOP picked up [in 1994] were open. By comparison, the authoritative (and subscription-only) Cook Political Report counts only four open, Democrat-held House seats in territory that is even vaguely competitive."

If we are asking whether Republicans can net 52 seats like they did in 1994, then this is an appropriate analysis (though we still have to note that it is relatively early in the cycle, and more seats are likely to come open if the situation doesn't improve for Democrats, as Cook

has also noted).

But if we're just asking whether or not the Republicans can back take the 40 House seats they need in order to take back the House there's a real problem here with this analysis (and if we're just asking whether Republicans can pick up the 30 or so seats they'd need to bring the Democrats' agenda to a grinding halt, it's irrelevant).

You see, open seats are a cause of midterm loss. But they're also an effect of a bad election shaping up. Running a losing campaign is no fun, and an awful lot of these open seats were open in 1994 because the incumbents saw that they were likely going to lose. Rather than fight it out, these incumbents picked up their toys and went home.

Almost all of these open seats won by Republicans were in Republican-leaning territory, eight of these vacating incumbents had won with 55% of the two-party vote or less in the relatively good Democratic year of 1992, and all but two of these incumbents had voted for either the 1993 Clinton budget or the assault weapons ban. Thirteen had voted for both controversial pieces of legislation.

As I've noted before, similarly-situated incumbents in 1994 suffered close to a 50% mortality rate. It doesn't require a stretch of the imagination to conclude that, even if all of these Democrats had run for re-election, Republicans would have defeated enough of them to retake the House. While the potential lack of retirements in 2010 certainly won't help Republicans any, it won't hold them to single digits, either.

Remember what tsunami midterms are like. In 1994, Mike Synar's seat was open because he was defeated in a primary election by a retired high school principal who spent less than \$20,000 on his campaign. Synar would not have survived the general election even if he had made it that far. Democrats like Earl Hutto in Pensacola, Marilyn Lloyd of Chattanooga, and William Hughes of South Jersey weren't coming back to Congress, regardless of whether they ran or not (much like Jim Nussle and Bob Beauprez in 2006).

2. "The Great Ideological Sort Out"

Kilgore argues:

The 1994 election was the high-water mark of the great ideological sorting that occurred between the two parties. That made the environment particularly harsh for southern Democrats, as well as those in the Midwest and Rocky Mountain West, where

many ancestral attachments to the Donkey Party came unmoored. . . . Nothing similar to those handicaps exists today. The ideological filtering of the parties is long over; any genuine conservative Democrats or liberal Republicans left in the electorate clearly have reasons for retaining their loyalties, which will be difficult to erode.

The problem with this was identified by Kilgore earlier in his piece, where he explained that "if you apply the Partisan Voting Index, (PVI), which compares a district's prior presidential results to national averages, you find that there are 66 Democrats in districts with a Republican PVI and only 15 Republicans in districts with a Democratic PVI--a similar situation to the 79 Democrats in Republican districts in 1994."

To the extent there was a "Great Ideological Sort Out" in the 1990s, it largely reversed itself in 2006 and 2008, when the Democrats decided to back pro-life, pro-gun Democrats in places like NC-11, AL-02, and other conservative districts. In fact, most Southern Congressional delegations are almost as heavily Democratic today as they were right before the 1994 elections; Democrats presently have one fewer seat than in 1994 in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia, have broken even in North Carolina and Florida, and gained a seat in Arkansas (Republicans have picked up a few more seats in these states due to reapportionment).

The end result is that, as Kilgore notes, there are almost as many Democrats in Republican-leaning districts today as there were in 1994. And there's no great trick to eroding the voters' loyalties to these Democrats here; many are newly elected and were elected because of incompetent or corrupt Republican incumbents, because they weren't being pressured by their leadership to vote for highly unpopular (in conservative districts) measures like cap and trade or health care reform, or because of unusually high African American and/or youth turnout in 2008 (on which more later).

3. Ye Olde Emerging Democratic Majority. I'm on record expressing great skepticism about the conglomeration of demographic observations that have come to be known as the "Emerging Democratic Majority Theory." Not that I believe there's a "Permanent Republican Majority," emerging or otherwise. I just don't believe in permanent majorities. □

'Toy Story' & other fave films get new life in 3D

By SANDY COHEN,
AP Entertainment Writer
LOS ANGELES — "Toy
Story" has always been a 3-

D film, even if moviegoers
never saw it that way.
Computer-generated
animation made the 1995

Pixar smash 3-D by design,
with virtual cameras
moving through a digital
space, capturing the mass
and dimension of each
character and setting. At
the time, though, theaters
lacked the high-tech
projectors required to
show it that way, forcing
filmmakers to collapse the
images back down to two
dimensions so the movie
could play in multiplexes.
More than a decade later,
projection technology
has caught up with CG
film making, inspiring
movie moguls such as
Jeffrey Katzenberg, James
Cameron, Peter Jackson
and Pixar's John Lasseter
to declare 3-D the future of
film.

Disney-Pixar, which
released "Up" in 3-D earlier
this year, is embracing the
future and past at once by
amping up the 3-D in "Toy
Story" and "Toy Story 2"
for a limited double-feature
run beginning Friday.

"It's a great 3-D movie
because (Pixar) had
discovered this ability to
move through these spaces
in 3-D," said stereographer
Bob Whitehill, who oversaw
the updates on both films.
"We were just never able
to project them in 3-D, and
now we can."

The Oscar-nominated tale of
Woody, Buzz Lightyear and
their toy box full of friends
isn't the only beloved
film getting a 3-D retrofit:
Cameron's company,
Lightstorm, reportedly has
a 3-D rerelease of "Titanic"
in the works. "Star Wars"
creator George Lucas has
said he'd like to convert
all six franchise films into
3-D and his company,
Lucasfilm, has worked
with a firm developing
technology to do that, but
a company spokeswoman
said no timeline exists for
now.

Converting a live-action
film to 3-D is even more
challenging, Whitehill said.
Artists must duplicate the
original film to create a
right-eye view, then cut out



In this film publicity image released by Disney Pixar, characters Woody, left, and Buzz Lightyear, from the animated film 'Toy Story,' are shown.

each element in the scene to
sculpt a three-dimensional
image. Further depth is
created by projecting flat
images onto computer-
generated geometric forms,
so the eye perceives a
natural distance between
the nose and ears on a face,
for example.

Though "Wall-E" and
"Ratatouille" have also been
tested, Pixar has no plans
to rerelease them in 3-D
— but all of the company's
future films will come in
two-dimensional and three-
dimensional versions.

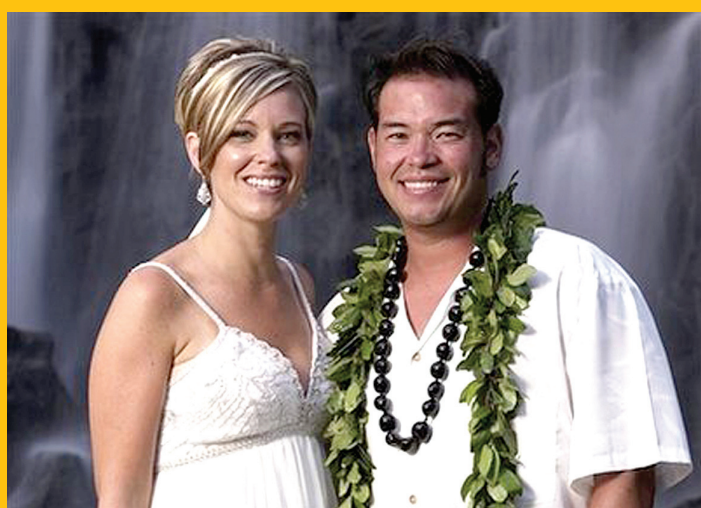
The rerelease of the two
"Toy Story" movies serves
an additional purpose:
It heralds the arrival of
"Toy Story 3" in 3-D next
summer.

Getting 1995's Woody and
Buzz back to the big screen
wasn't easy. Even though
the original movies were
made in three dimensions,
it took Whitehill and his
team of 20 artists nearly 18
months to update the two
"Toy Story" films.

The first challenge was
technical: Extracting digital

files from 15-year-old
software. The second was
creative, Whitehill said:
"How do we want to give the
audience a rich experience
without eye strain and to
capture the heart of these
movies?"

Dimensionalized, "Toy
Story" shows how far the
fall is when Woody tumbles
from the bed to the floor and
just how cavernous a child's
toy box can be. The aim
was to create "a concave
experience, one that draws
you into the story and into
the imagery, instead of a
convex experience that
pokes at you," Whitehill
said. His team went through
the two films shot by shot,
digitally adding a "right-
eye camera" to each. Then
they carefully adjusted the
speed of the edits and depth
of the images to make each
movie easy on the eyes —
especially given the length
of the two films combined.
"The amount of 3-D
people enjoy is somewhat
subjective," Whitehill said.
"But a headache is not
subjective." □



FILE - This image released by TLC, shows Jon Gosselin, right, and his wife Kate Gosselin, from the TLC series 'Jon & Kate Plus 8,' in Hawaii.

(AP Photo/TLC, Mark Arbeit)

Filming of 'Jon & Kate' kids halted

By FRAZIER MOORE,
AP Television Writer

NEW YORK — TLC network has shut down filming of the
children on "Jon & Kate Plus 8" after receiving a cease-
and-desist order from their father, Jon Gosselin.

In a statement, the network said production would remain
suspended "pending further conversations" between both
Gosselins, who are parents of young twins and sextuplets.
Filming not directly involving the kids continues, TLC said
Thursday.

"It appears that Jon's priority is Jon and his interests,"
his estranged wife, Kate Gosselin, said in a statement on
Thursday. "My priority remains our children and their well
being."

The Insider Web site reported Thursday that Gosselin
demanded through his lawyers that the TLC production
crew vacate the property of the family home in Wernersville,
Pennsylvania.

The Gosselins filed for divorce in June, after weeks of
reports of marital discord.

In her statement, Kate Gosselin said, "I'm saddened and
confused by Jon's public media statements. Jon has never
expressed any concerns to me about our children being
involved in the show and, in fact, is on the record as saying
he believes the show benefits our children and was taping
on Friday with the kids."

On Monday, TLC announced that the weekly series would
be renamed "Kate Plus Eight," with a reduced involvement
by Jon Gosselin, who remains under "an exclusive contract"
with TLC.

In her statement, Kate Gosselin said, "I do the show for my
family because I believe it provides us opportunities we
wouldn't otherwise have. Jon used to share that belief until
as recently as the day the network announced the name
change of the show and indicated that Jon would have a
lesser role in the show."

Gosselin's lawyer, Mark Jay Heller, did not immediately
return calls to The Associated Press. □

Before Lucy came Ardi, new earliest hominid found

By **RANDOLPH E. SCHMID**,
AP Science Writer

Randolph E. Schmid, AP Science Writer — Thu Oct 1, 10:30 am ET WASHINGTON — The story of humankind is reaching back another million years as scientists learn more about “Ardi,” a hominid who lived 4.4 million years ago in what is now Ethiopia.

The 110-pound, 4-foot female roamed forests a million years before the famous Lucy, long studied as the earliest skeleton of a human ancestor.

This older skeleton reverses the common wisdom of human evolution, said anthropologist C. Owen Lovejoy of Kent State University.

Rather than humans evolving from an ancient chimp-like creature, the new find provides evidence that chimps and humans evolved from some long-ago common ancestor — but each evolved and changed separately along the way.

“This is not that common ancestor, but it’s the closest we have ever been able to come,” said Tim White, director of the Human Evolution Research Center at the University of California, Berkeley.

The lines that evolved into modern humans and living apes probably shared an ancestor 6 million to 7 million years ago, White said in a telephone interview.

But Ardi has many traits that do not appear in modern-day African apes, leading to the conclusion that the apes evolved extensively since we shared that last common ancestor. A study of Ardi, under way since the first bones were discovered in 1994, indicates the species lived in the woodlands and could climb on all fours along tree branches, but the development of their arms and legs indicates they didn’t spend much time in the trees. And they could walk upright, on two legs, when on the ground.

Formally dubbed *Ardipithecus ramidus* — which means root of the ground ape — the find is detailed in 11 research papers published Thursday by the journal *Science*.

“This is one of the most important discoveries for the study of human evolution,”

said David Pilbeam, curator of paleoanthropology at Harvard’s Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology.

“It is relatively complete in that it preserves head, hands, feet and some critical parts in between. It represents a genus plausibly ancestral to *Australopithecus* — itself ancestral to our genus *Homo*,” said Pilbeam, who was not part of the research teams. Scientists assembled the skeleton from 125 pieces.

Lucy, also found in Africa, thrived a million years after Ardi and was of the more human-like genus *Australopithecus*.

“In *Ardipithecus* we have an unspecialized form that hasn’t evolved very far in the direction of *Australopithecus*. So when you go from head to toe, you’re seeing a mosaic creature that is neither chimpanzee, nor is it human. It is *Ardipithecus*,” said White.

White noted that Charles Darwin, whose research in the 19th century paved the way for the science of evolution, was cautious about the last common ancestor between humans and apes.

“Darwin said we have to be really careful. The only way we’re really going to know what this last common ancestor looked like is to go and find it. Well, at 4.4 million years ago we found something pretty close to it,” White said. “And, just like Darwin appreciated, evolution of the ape lineages and the human lineage has been going on independently since the time those lines split, since that last common ancestor we shared.”

Some details about Ardi in the collection of papers:

- Ardi was found in Ethiopia’s Afar Rift, where many fossils of ancient plants and animals have been discovered. Findings near the skeleton indicate that at the time it was a wooded environment. Fossils of 29 species of birds and 20 species of small mammals were found at the site.

- Geologist Giday WoldeGabriel of Los Alamos National Laboratory was able to use volcanic layers above and below the fossil to date it to 4.4 million years ago.



Dr. C. Owen Lovejoy, Kent State University professor of anthropology, stands next to the reconstructed skeleton of “Lucy,” a near-complete fossil of a human ancestor that walked upright more than three million years ago. A team of researchers including Lovejoy today unveiled research findings of a skeleton older than “Lucy,” nicknamed “Ardi.”

“(PRNewsFoto/Kent State University)”

No texting at dinner! Parenting in the digital era

By **KARYN D. COLLINS**,
Associated Press

Holly Kopczynski always prided herself on raising her kids the right way, teaching them etiquette basics like saying “please” and “thank you.” Then it happened.

“We were at a restaurant for my mom’s birthday. I looked over and there are my daughter and my oldest son texting, holding their phones under the table,” said the mom of four in Lewiston, Idaho. “I just came unglued. I was like, ‘Are you kidding? You’re at your grandma’s birthday party. Put those phones away now!’”

We all know teens love their gadgets — more for texting than talking. But the devices are posing some new challenges for parents. How can they teach their tech-savvy kids some electronic etiquette?

So far, parents are learning on the fly, imposing new rules for their young offenders such as “no texting at dinner.”

Beth Herina of Ringwood, N.J., made that rule two years ago because her 13-year-old son was texting friends at the dinner table. She has another rule, too: No texting on family outings.

“He can text en route but not

• Ardi’s upper canine teeth are more like the stubby ones of modern humans than the long, sharp, pointed ones of male chimpanzees and most other primates. An analysis of the tooth enamel suggests a diverse diet, including fruit and other woodland-based foods such as nuts and leaves.

• Paleoanthropologist Gen Suwa of the University of Tokyo reported that Ardi’s face had a projecting muzzle, giving her an ape-like appearance. But it didn’t thrust forward quite as much as the lower faces of modern African apes do. Some features of her skull, such as the ridge above the eye socket, are quite different from those of chimpanzees. The details of the bottom of the skull, where nerves and blood vessels enter the brain, indicate that Ardi’s brain was positioned in a way similar to modern humans, possibly suggesting that the

hominid brain may have been already poised to expand areas involving aspects of visual and spatial perception.

• Ardi’s hand and wrist were a mix of primitive traits and a few new ones, but they don’t include the hallmark traits of the modern tree-hanging, knuckle-walking chimps and gorillas. She had relatively short palms and fingers which were flexible, allowing her to support her body weight on her palms while moving along tree branches, but she had to be a careful climber because she lacked the anatomical features that allow modern-day African apes to swing, hang and easily move through the trees.

• The pelvis and hip show the gluteal muscles were positioned so she could walk upright.

• Her feet were rigid enough for walking but still had a grasping big toe for use in climbing. □



when it is family time,” she said. “And I ask questions about who he is texting.”

Her son Dylan may not like mom’s rules, but she considers them mild. Her brother-in-law goes into his children’s cell phone accounts to read their texts.

When it comes to gadgets like cell phones and computers, some kids and even some adults don’t seem to consider their gadget behavior rude, said P.M. Forni, co-founder of Johns Hopkins University’s Civility Initiative.

“We’re seeing behavior that you never would have seen before,” he said. “Students getting up in the middle of class to answer their phones, texting during class, students watching TV on their laptops during lectures.”

Kopczynski said she told her 20-year-old son and 16-year-old daughter to shut their phones off and put them away, which they did, but it was their reaction to her order that still bothers her.

“That was a sad moment for me,” she said. “I grew up with rules, the ‘no elbows on the table’ kind of things. And I’ve raised my kids with that. But they didn’t even realize what they were doing.”

It’s not only cell phones that parents are restricting.

Many are establishing control over their children’s computer use — setting themselves up as administrators for Internet accounts, asking kids questions about who they are communicating with online, and at times looking directly over their shoulders at the screen. □



FILE - In this March 17, 2005 file photo, pop star Michael Jackson arrives at the Santa Barbara County Courthouse in Santa Maria, Calif.

(AP Photo/Michael A. Mariant, file)

AP Exclusive: Autopsy shocker: Jackson was healthy

By THOMAS WATKINS,
Associated Press Writer
LOS ANGELES – Michael Jackson's arms were covered with punctures, his face and neck were scarred and he had tattooed eyebrows and lips, but he wasn't the sickly skeleton of a man portrayed by tabloids, according to his autopsy report obtained by The Associated Press.

In fact, the Los Angeles County coroner's report shows Jackson was a fairly healthy 50-year-old before he died of an overdose. His 136 pounds were in the acceptable range for a 5-foot-9 man. His heart was strong with no sign of plaque buildup. And his kidneys and most other major organs were normal.

Still, Jackson had health issues: arthritis in the lower spine and some fingers, and mild plaque buildup in his leg arteries. Most serious was his lungs, which the autopsy report said were chronically inflamed and had reduced capacity that might have left him short of breath.

Continued on Next Page



European Union foreign policy Chief Javier Solana, right, sits next to US chief negotiator William Burns, left, at the opening of the Geneva nuclear talks on Iran's atomic programme in Geneva, Thursday, Oct. 1, 2009. The U.S. and five other world powers began high-stakes talks Thursday with Iran to demand a freeze of its nuclear activities, with a senior U.S. official saying Washington is open to rare one-on-one talks with Iranian diplomats.

(AP Photo/Keystone/Dominic Favre, Pool)

Iran, world powers agree to meet again

By GEORGE JAHN,
Associated Press Writer

GENTHOD, Switzerland – Iran and six world powers ended a landmark meeting Thursday with an agreement to take a new stab at overcoming years of mistrust generated by Tehran's nuclear program and meet again this month for wide-ranging discussions on the two sides' concerns.

Adding to the optimism generated by the decision to hold follow-up talks was a rare bilateral meeting between the senior U.S. and Iranian delegates to the meeting. In addition, diplomats said Iran will open its newly disclosed nuclear plant to U.N. inspectors, probably within a few weeks.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, speaking in Washington shortly after the talks ended, called the day productive but sounded a pragmatic note, as well.

"I will count it as a positive sign when it moves from gestures and engagements to actions and results," she said. "That's a necessary pathway and I think we're on it. We've always said we would engage. But we're not talking for the sake of talking," she said, adding, "Today's meeting opened the door, but let's see what

happens."

U.S. Deputy State Department spokesman Robert Wood said Undersecretary of State William Burns used the meeting with chief Iranian delegate Saeed Jalili "to reiterate the international community's concerns about Iran's nuclear program.

"He addressed the need for Iran to take concrete and practical steps that are consistent with its international obligations and that will build international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its program.

"While the focus of the discussion was on Iran's nuclear program, both sides had a frank exchange on other issues, including human rights," said Wood.

The encounter appeared to be concrete proof of President Barack Obama's commitment to engage Iran directly on nuclear and other issues — a sharp break from the policy under the Bush administration.

More broadly, the meeting suggested that Obama was putting his concept of U.S. foreign policy into action, with its emphasis on negotiating even with the nations that are most hostile to the United States.

Continued on Page B6

Conditions combined for devastating tsunami

By SETH BORENSTEIN,
AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON – Because of a lethal combination of geology and geography, the people of American Samoa didn't stand much of a chance. Almost every condition that triggers bad tsunamis was in place this time, generating waves that raced toward the island territory at speeds approaching 530 mph, or as fast as a 747 jumbo jet. And there was almost nothing to slow the water down.

It all started with a type of earthquake that tends to generate strong tsunamis because of the angle at which the ground breaks. Also, the quake was extremely powerful, with a magnitude of 8.0. It struck just below the ocean floor, which means very little lost energy. And it happened in deep water, which means bigger waves.

The deeper water also meant the tsunami sped along the ocean faster. American Samoa happened to be close to the epicenter, about 125 miles, and at just the right angle, with almost no shallow water to slow the speeding waves down.

Put that all together and there was less than 25 minutes, maybe as little as 13 minutes, between the ground shaking and the first tremendous waves swamping Samoa.

And it didn't help that an international computerized system, designed for relief agencies to figure out if they needed to respond, had a computer failure that caused it to pooh-pooh the tsunami's wrath initially.

Continued on Page B3



Five-year-old Victor Chupina shows his moves while he waits to buy tickets to a special pre-screening of the Michael Jackson film “This Is It,” at LA Live in Los Angeles. Jackson devotees have been camping for days in downtown Los Angeles to get tickets for the debut of a film about the fallen pop star rehearsing for a concert tour derailed by his death.

(AFP/Robyn Beck)

Michael Jackson

Continued from Page B1

However, according to the document, the lung condition was not serious enough to be a direct or contributing cause of death.

“His overall health was fine,” said Dr. Zeev Kain, chairman of

the anesthesiology department at the University of California, Irvine, who reviewed a copy of the autopsy report for the AP. “The results are within normal limits.”

Kain was not involved in the autopsy. The full autopsy report has not been released

publicly, but the AP obtained a copy.

Jackson died at his rented Los Angeles mansion June 25 after his personal physician, Dr. Conrad Murray, administered the anesthetic propofol and two other sedatives to get the chronic insomniac to sleep, court documents state. Propofol, normally a surgical anesthetic used in operating rooms, acts as a respiratory depressant and requires constant monitoring, Murray told police he left the room to use the bathroom and phone records show he also made calls for 47 minutes around the time Jackson encountered problems. When Murray realized Jackson was unresponsive, he began frantic efforts to revive him, but Jackson never regained consciousness and was declared dead at the University of California, Los Angeles Medical Center.

The coroner’s office announced last month that Jackson’s death was a homicide caused by “acute propofol intoxication,” with the other sedatives listed as a contributing factor. They said the standard of care for administering propofol was not met and the recommended equipment for patient monitoring, precision dosing and resuscitation was missing. Murray is the target of what Los Angeles police term a manslaughter investigation. The decision on criminal charges will come from the Los Angeles County district attorney’s office. Murray has been interviewed twice by police. Except for a brief video

posted to YouTube, Murray has not spoken publicly since Jackson’s death. In the video, he said: “I told the truth and I have faith the truth will prevail.” Murray’s attorney, Edward Chernoff, previously has said nothing Murray gave Jackson “should have” killed him.

Jackson was declared dead a little more than two hours after paramedics were called. Evidence of the desperate struggle to save the star were evident on his body. He had chest bruising and cracked ribs from CPR, and a mechanical device known as a balloon pump was inserted into his heart to try to restart it, according to the autopsy report.

Jackson’s body was taken by helicopter to the coroner’s office where the following morning Chief Medical Examiner Lakshmanan Sathyavagiswaran and Dr. Christopher Rogers carried out an extensive review and ordered a toxicology screening to look for drugs in his system.

Aside from propofol and the sedatives, the only substances found in his system were the local anesthetic, Lidocaine, sometimes used to numb injection sites and ephedrine, a commonly used resuscitation stimulant.

No other drugs — legal or otherwise — were detected, nor was any alcohol.

Kain said he was surprised that three other sedatives, known as benzodiazepines, were present with propofol. Anesthesiologists sometimes mix one “benzo” with propofol to help put a patient under, but using three increases the danger for the patient.

“People don’t mix the benzodiazepines together because they interact with each other and increase the risk of respiratory arrest,” Kain said, adding it was likely Jackson first stopped breathing and then suffered cardiac arrest.

The autopsy findings cut off a potential defense for Murray — that Jackson hid serious pre-existing conditions that increased the risk of death from the drugs he willingly took. Even if he did hide a condition such as his weakened lungs, a prosecutor could argue Murray should have detected the condition before administering drugs, said Michael Brennan, a clinical law professor at

the University of Southern California who specializes in criminal defense.

“A doctor has some obligation to know what his patient’s physical condition is,” Brennan said. “The doctor is going to try to substantiate whatever the patient told him ... and not simply rely on a patient’s descriptions of his physical condition.”

At the time of his death Jackson was preparing for a series of comeback concerts in London. Rehearsals were rigorous and there were questions about whether Jackson would be physically able to hold up.

But aside from his lungs, the autopsy report did not identify any serious physical problems that might have limited Jackson’s ability to perform. It also provided details about his physical state from head to toes.

He had a 3/4-inch scar behind his left ear and another apparent scar behind his right ear. He had a scar beside each of his nostrils and another, 4-inch scar on his right shoulder. He had a pair of additional scars about 3-inches long at the base of his neck and smaller scars on his arms and wrist. He also had a small scar near his navel and a 2-inch scar on the right-hand side of his abdomen.

Kain said most of the scars appeared to be from plastic surgery though others, like a scar on the knee, could have been from a medical procedure.

The medical examiner found numerous punctures on both arms and on a knee and ankle. The leg punctures could have been from intravenous therapies not described in the autopsy report, Kain said.

Jackson had several tattoos, all them cosmetic, including dark tattoos in the areas of both eyebrows and under his eyes, and a pink tattoo around his lips. He was going bald at the front of his head, with his remaining hair described as short and tightly curled. The bald part of his scalp was darkened with what appeared to be a tattoo stretching across the top of his head from ear to ear. The coroner found depigmentation of his skin around his chest, abdomen, face and arms.

The coroner also found Jackson was actively producing sperm □



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Death toll in Samoas tsunami reaches 150



A man searches through the rubble of a destroyed village outside Apia in Samoa on Wednesday Sept. 30, 2009. A powerful quake in the South Pacific hurled massive tsunami waves at the shores of Samoa, American Samoa and Tonga flattening villages and sweeping cars and people back out to sea while leaving more than 100 dead and dozens missing.

(AP Photo/New Zealand Herald, Brett Phibbs)

By ROD McGUIRK
and AUDREY McAVOY,
Associated Press Writers

APIA, Samoa — Samoans searched flattened homes and debris-filled swamps Thursday as more military ships and planes began arriving on the disaster-stricken Pacific islands after an earthquake and tsunami that killed at least 150 people.

The day after the disaster struck, officials were expecting the death toll to rise as more areas were searched — a process that could take several weeks.

A Navy frigate carrying two helicopters and medical supplies arrived late Wednesday in American Samoa, and the Air Force dispatched two cargo planes. Australian officials said they will send an air force plane carrying 20 tons of humanitarian aid.

“This is a devastating earthquake and a devastating tsunami,” Federal Emergency Management Agency coordinating officer Kenneth Tingman told reporters in American Samoa. “We know that power is paramount but we are also doing life saving and life sustaining efforts.”

A magnitude 8.0 quake struck off Samoa at 6:48 a.m. local time (1:48 p.m. EDT; 1748 GMT) Tuesday. The islands soon were engulfed by four tsunami waves 15 to 20 feet (4 to 6 meters) high that reached up to a mile (1.5 kilometers) inland.

The Samoas lie about halfway between New Zealand and

Hawaii, just east of the international date line.

Samoan Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele’s own village of Lesa was washed away — like many others on Samoa and nearby American Samoa and Tonga. He inspected Wednesday the southeast coast of the main Samoan island of Upolu, the most heavily hit area. He described seeing “complete” devastation. Dazed survivors told of being trapped underwater or flung inland by the tsunami.

“In some villages absolutely no house was standing. All that was achieved within 10 minutes by the very powerful tsunami,” he said.

“To me it was like a monster — just black water coming to you. It wasn’t a wave that breaks, it was a full force of water coming straight,” said Luana Tavale, an American Samoa government employee. Tuilaepa said the death toll in Samoa was 110, mostly elderly and young children. At least 31 people were killed on American Samoa, Gov. Togiola Tulafono said. Officials in the island nation of Tonga said nine people had been killed.

Samoan police commander Lilo Maiava predicted the toll would rise.

“It may take a week, two weeks or even three weeks” to complete the search for the many people still missing, he said.

The quake was centered about 120 miles (190 kilometers) south of the nation of Samoa, formerly part of New Zealand,

which has about 220,000 people, and American Samoa, a U.S. territory of 65,000.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Hawaii said it issued an alert, but the waves came so quickly that residents only had about 10 minutes to respond.

New Zealand school teacher Charlie Pearse choked back tears as she spoke to New Zealand’s TV One News from an Apia hospital bed in Samoa, recalling how she was trapped underwater and thought she was going to die.

She was in the back of a truck trying to outrun the tsunami with about 20 children when a wave tossed the truck and it landed on top of them.

“We all went under the water and I think a number of the children died instantly,” Pearse said.

“I asked, ‘Is this my time to come home? Take me home, I’m ready,’ and I let my breath out and I took a big gulp of water ... and I don’t know, I just popped out (from under the water),” Pearse said.

On the island of Upolu, taro farmer Tony Fauena said he ran for the hills when the deadly tsunami thundered across the coast while his niece ran to rescue her 6-month-old son. Villagers found the bodies of the mother and son entangled in uprooted trees and debris at the foot of lush mountains 200 yards (meters) from the ocean.

“Many parents died trying to protect their children,” Fauena told The Associated Press from the ruins of a brother’s home in the village of Sale Ataga on the southeast coast as he watched police search the same area for four more missing relatives.

The heavily damaged southeast coast of the island was a stretch of flattened, mud-swept villages. Mattresses hung from trees. Police searched for survivors amid pulverized homes and bodies scattered in a swamp. Several tourist resorts were wiped out, authorities said.

In Tonga, government spokesman Lopeti Senituli said parts of an island have disappeared, with two of the island’s three villages virtually flattened. □



People search through the rubble following a powerful earthquake in Pago Pago village, on American Samoa Tuesday, Sept. 29, 2009. The quake in the South Pacific hurled massive tsunami waves at the shores of Samoa and American Samoa, flattening villages and sweeping cars and people back out to sea while leaving scores dead and dozens missing.

(AP Photo/SamoaNews.com, Ausage Fausia)

TSUNAMI

Continued from Page B1

“This is the kind of earthquake one would expect to be very destructive in the areas close to the epicenter, and unfortunately it was,” said Stuart Weinstein, deputy director at the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Ewa Beach, Hawaii.

The shaking at the weather service office in Pago Pago, the capital of American Samoa, was so bad that one official immediately called the tsunami warning center in Hawaii, while the island’s chief meteorologist phoned homeland security to activate the warning system. Just before 7 a.m. local time, bulletins

were issued and alerts aired on TV and radio.

But there wasn’t enough time. Four sets of waves 15 to 20 feet high hit. As of Wednesday afternoon, the death toll had climbed well over 100.

“It’s one of those heart-wrenching situations where you have some time, but what can you do? It’s not much time,” said Eric Geist, a tsunami specialist and geophysicist at the U.S. Geological Survey in Menlo Park, Calif.

Tsunamis are towering waves triggered by earthquakes. They can top 100 feet, and can stick around for as much as an hour, recede violently, then come back hours later. □

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Dems turn back GOP health bill tax amendments



Senate Finance Committee members, from left, Sen. Jay Rockefeller, D-W.Va. and Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., center, confer with committee chairman Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont. on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, Oct. 1, 2009, as the committee continued its health care markup.

By ERICA WERNER,
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Rejecting Republican amendments, Democrats turned back GOP efforts to cast the health care overhaul as a tax hike on the middle class Thursday, as a crucial Senate panel aimed to wrap up debate on the measure by nightfall.

The outcome increasingly appeared inevitable with Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus, D-Mont., declaring he had the votes for approval of the bill embracing President Barack Obama's priorities of extending coverage to the uninsured and holding down spiraling medical costs.

The final committee vote probably won't happen until next week so senators and the Congressional Budget Office have time to review the legislation. The full Senate and House are to take it up later this month.

The legislation would dramatically reshape the U.S. health care system, extending coverage to about 95 percent of Americans, making carrying insurance a requirement for the first time, providing subsidies to help poorer people buy health plans and barring insurance industry practices like dropping coverage for sick people.

A new purchasing exchange, or marketplace, would let people shop for and compare insurance plans that would

(AP Photo/Harry Hamburg)

be required to meet certain standards. Baucus' bill leaves out a new government-run insurance plan — opposed by Republicans — to compete with private companies.

Republicans argued on Thursday that taxes the bill proposes on people who don't comply with the new mandate to buy health insurance would break Obama's promise to shield families making under \$250,000 a year from tax hikes.

The fees could rise as high as \$1,900 for households that don't buy coverage.

"There are going to be a lot of people whose taxes are increased by this legislation," said Sen. Mike Crapo, R-Idaho. That would violate "the promise and the pledge the president has made to the American people," he contended.

Democrats replied that the bill actually amounted to a \$40 billion tax cut for Americans over 10 years since it provides for credits to help lower income people buy coverage.

"This is a message amendment," said Baucus, contending that offerings by Crapo and Sen. John Ensign, R-Nev., were designed to make arguments against the bill, not improve it.

"What you're saying is you want to gut the president's program. More than that, you want to gut health reform," Baucus said.

The Crapo and Ensign

amendments would have provided that individuals making less than \$200,000 a year and families making less than \$250,000 would be exempt from some of the fees in the bill. Both failed 12-11, with moderate Democratic Sen. Blanche Lincoln of Arkansas joining all 10 committee Republicans to vote "yes."

Another Ensign amendment — to limit the impact of a new tax on high-value insurance plans that is the bill's main financing mechanism — also failed on a 12-11 vote. This time Sen. Debbie Stabenow, D-Mich., joined Republicans in voting "yes."

Her state is home to major labor unions that oppose the tax because they fear members' health plans would be affected.

The back-and-forth came after Baucus opened the committee's seventh day of work by announcing he hoped to complete debate by the end of the day, opening the way for Democratic leaders to bring the historic legislation to the floors of both the House and Senate as early as mid-October.

Still, two weeks before the projected start of debate, key decisions are yet to be made.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid must decide, for example, whether to include a government insurance option, a provision sought by liberals who argue it would subject private insurers to much-needed competition.

Legislation that cleared the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee earlier in the year includes the so-called public option, but the Finance Committee twice rejected proposals along those lines this week. The Finance bill has nonprofit cooperatives instead.

"I favor a public option. We're going to do our very best to have a public option. But remember, a public option is a relative term," Reid, D-Nev., said Thursday. Several senators are floating compromises. □



In this photo, reviewed by the U.S. military, an American flag flutters in the wind, pictured through a broken window from inside an unused airplane hangar used for media activities at Camp Justice, the site of the U.S. war crimes tribunal compound, at Guantanamo Bay U.S. Naval Base, Cuba, July 16, 2009.

REUTERS/Brennan Linsley/Pool

House votes against bringing Gitmo detainees to US

By ANDREW TAYLOR,
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The House went on record Thursday against allowing detainees at the Guantanamo Bay prison in Cuba to be transferred to the United States, even to face trial or to be jailed in maximum-security prisons.

The 258-163 vote on a nonbinding recommendation put Democrats controlling the House in a difficult spot and prompted senior lawmakers to postpone unveiling a House-Senate agreement on a homeland security funding bill.

If such a ban were to become law, the Obama administration would be hard-pressed to close the Guantanamo Bay prison by January as Obama has promised.

Eighty-eight Democrats broke with Obama and House leaders on the nonbinding recommendation, an ominous sign for future votes. It would be difficult for lawmakers to change their positions without drawing withering criticism from political adversaries.

The administration has yet to reveal its plan for closing the prison. Supporters of the transfer ban say an overwhelming number of their constituents want to keep Guantanamo prisoners where they are.

"There is no reason these terrorists, who pose a serious and documented threat to our nation, cannot be brought to justice right where they are in Cuba," said Rep. Harold Rogers, R-Ky. "I certainly think that is where the American people stand on this issue — they don't want these terrorists in their hometowns."

Supporters of closing Guantanamo say the facility and the lengthy detention of suspects who may have been held indefinitely without trial have stained the United States' reputation across the globe. And they said fears of bringing the detainees to the U.S. are exaggerated.

"I refuse to believe that our law enforcement officials, our prison officials and our Justice Department officials are not skilled enough and thoughtful enough to imprison these thugs in high-security facilities at minimal or no danger to our citizens and our communities," said House Appropriations Committee Chairman David Obey, D-Wis.

Several of the fiscal 2010 funding bills contain varying restrictions on the transfer of Guantanamo detainees, reflecting widespread opposition among voters about bringing enemy combatants onto U.S. soil. A bill pending on the Senate floor, for example, contains an outright ban on releasing Guantanamo detainees into the U.S.

The vote also put House members on record as backing the Obama administration's refusal to release new photos showing U.S. personnel abusing detainees held overseas.

President Barack Obama has already said he would use every available means to block release of additional detainee abuse photos because they could whip up anti-American sentiment overseas and endanger U.S. troops. His powers include issuing an order to classify the photos, thus blocking their release. □

Elizabeth Smart says she was raped daily

By JENNIFER DOBNER,

Associated Press Writer

Jennifer Dobner, Associated Press Writer—6 mins ago
SALT LAKE CITY — Elizabeth Smart testified Thursday she was raped repeatedly each day after she was abducted from her bedroom seven years ago and told she would be killed if she yelled or tried to escape. She described Brian David Mitchell, her alleged kidnapper, as “evil, wicked, manipulative, stinky, slimy, selfish, not spiritual, not religious, not close to God.” Smart testified in U.S. District Court in Salt Lake City as part of a competency proceeding for the man charged in her 2002 kidnapping.

Mitchell has twice been found incompetent for trial in state court. Mitchell and his estranged wife were found with Smart nine months after she disappeared from her Salt Lake City home.

A judge ruled earlier this week that testimony from Smart, now 21, is relevant to the mental competency of Mitchell, who was removed from the courtroom before Smart arrived and taken to a holding cell where he could listen to the proceedings.

Smart was poised and composed while testifying for just under two hours.

She was 14 when she was abducted from her Salt Lake City home at knifepoint in the middle of the night. Shortly after her abduction, Smart said Mitchell took her to a mountain camp and performed a ceremony she said was intended to marry the two.

“After that, he proceeded to rape me,” Smart said.

She said he held her captive with a cable attached to her leg that had a 10-foot reach. That line was attached to another cable strung between

two trees.

Smart said Mitchell plied her with alcohol and drugs to lower her resistance.

“He said that he would kill anybody that would come into the camp, or kill me if I ever tried to escape or yell out,” Smart testified.

Smart said Mitchell was motivated by sex and used religion to get what he wanted.

Mitchell’s defense attorneys had sought to limit Smart’s testimony to her experiences with Mitchell, without her opinions about his mental state. The defense objected to the 39 so-called “lay witnesses” proposed by prosecutors, including Mitchell’s family, friends or workers at Utah State Hospital, because they lacked the expertise to evaluate competency.

In a ruling Monday, U.S. District Judge Dale Kimball rejected the argument as it relates to Smart, saying her testimony may help the court settle differences in the findings of experts who have evaluated Mitchell.

Experts have split opinions over Mitchell’s competency and have relied on statements from others — including Smart — and past evaluations to prepare reports for the court. Kimball’s ruling said Mitchell has been uncooperative with evaluators and refused to participate in diagnostic tests. In the state court system, Mitchell was twice found incompetent to stand trial.

Smart was rescued nine months after her abduction when a motorist spotted her walking through a suburb with Mitchell and his estranged wife, Wanda Eileen Barzee.

Last year, Mitchell was indicted by a federal grand jury on charges of kidnapping and unlawful transportation of



Elizabeth Smart, right, walks out of the federal courthouse with her mother Lois Smart after testifying at a competency hearing for her alleged kidnapper, Brian David Mitchell, Oct. 1 2009, in Salt Lake City.

(AP Photo/Colin Braley)

a minor.

Once an itinerant street polygamous wife and may in a 27-page manifesto drafted preacher, Mitchell is said have taken her to fulfill a in April 2002. □

Soldier accused of selling stolen anti-tank weapon

JACKSON, Tenn. — A U.S. Army soldier was arrested and charged with selling four stolen hand grenades and a stolen anti-tank rocket to an undercover officer in Tennessee, federal prosecutors said Thursday.

U.S. Attorney Lawrence Laurenzi said at a news conference in Jackson that the Fort Campbell soldier, Pfc. Joshua Bartlett Etherton, 29, was charged in a previously sealed indictment and was arrested Wednesday night.

The prosecutor said the transaction was arranged after police in the small town of Paris received a tip.

Laurenzi and law enforcement agency officials at the news conference declined to discuss who Etherton believed was the buyer. He said the two-count indictment charges Etherton with illegal possession of military ordnance. A conviction on each

count carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

Laurenzi said the indictment was unsealed after Etherton’s initial court appearance earlier Thursday. The federal public defender’s office in Memphis was appointed to represent Etherton. A telephone message left there was not immediately returned.

The indictment accuses Etherton of selling a M72A3 anti-tank rocket and four M67 hand grenades, all of which were reported stolen from Fort Campbell while he was stationed there.

Etherton is assigned to the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, and has been assigned to Fort Campbell since March 2008. He has had one deployment to Iraq.

Proceedings to discharge Etherton from the Army have begun. □



TODAY

KEEP ARUBA CLEAN...



THANKS FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION



Genève, Suisse - 1^{er} octobre 2009
Geneva, Switzerland - 1 October 2009

Iran's chief nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili (R) is welcomed by European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana for a meeting on nuclear power of Iran in Geneva October 1, 2009. Six world powers met with Iran in Switzerland on Thursday for talks U.S. officials said would need to convince them Tehran was prepared to show it was not hiding plans for a nuclear bomb.

REUTERS/Dominic Favre/Pool (SWITZERLAND POLITICS)

GENEVA TALKS

Continued from Page B1

Confirming that the seven nations planned to meet again, senior EU envoy Javier

Solana said Iran had pledged to open its newly revealed uranium enrichment plant to International Atomic Energy Agency inspection soon.

Iran's disclosure of the new plant had threatened to poison the atmosphere of the talks, with the West saying Tehran only revealed it because it

feared it would found out. Uranium enrichment can make both nuclear fuel and the fissile core of nuclear warheads. Solana said Iran had pledged to "cooperate fully and immediately with the IAEA," and said he expected Tehran to invite agency inspectors looking for signs of covert nuclear weapons activity to visit "in the next couple of weeks."

At the United Nations, the Iranian Foreign Minister confirmed the plant would be opened to inspectors. "The letter from the IAEA to the Islamic Republic of Iran, in response to the information we have provided in this respect, and with regard to the new facilities that are under construction, indicate the fact that the agency has appreciated Iran's move and dialogue for arranging a visit by the IAEA official is under way," Manouchehr Mottaki said. Mottaki suggested his

country's talks with the U.S. and five other world powers could be expanded to the "summit" level. He said Iran was willing to discuss a variety of security, economic and political issues, although he did not specifically refer to nuclear issues, which the six powers consider the most critical topic. The five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council — the U.S., Russia, China, Britain and France — plus Germany hope to persuade Tehran to freeze the enrichment program. Going into Thursday's talks, one of the top U.S. goals was to get the Iranians to commit to a second round of talks within a couple of weeks in order to keep the dialogue in a compact timeframe. The U.S. assumption was that if Iran was willing to engage seriously on the nuclear issue, a positive sign would be its agreement to have a second meeting shortly. □



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SCHEDULE FOR WEEK OF OCTOBER 1 - OCTOBER 7

*matinee: saturday & sunday | late show: friday and saturday

AT RENAISSANCE - ORANJESTAD

| | | | | | |
|-----------|--|-------|------------|------------|------------|
| R | THE INFORMANT | | | | NEW |
| | daily: | 6:00 | 8:30 | | |
| | matinee: | 1:00 | 3:30 | late show: | 11:00 |
| R | MANAGEMENT | | | | |
| | daily: | 7:00 | 9:15 | | |
| | matinee: | | late show: | 11:30 | |
| R | JENNIFER'S BODY | | | | |
| | daily: | 5:30 | 7:45 | 10:00 | |
| | matinee: | 1:00 | 3:15 | late show: | 12:15 |
| PG | FAME | | | | |
| | daily: | 4:00 | 6:15 | 8:45 | |
| | matinee: | 1:30 | | late show: | 11:15 |
| R | FINAL DESTINATION 4 | | | | |
| | daily: | | 8:00 | 10:00 | |
| | matinee: | | | 12:00 | 3D |
| PG | ALIENS IN THE ATTIC | | | | |
| | daily: | 4:45 | | | |
| | matinee: | 12:15 | 2:30 | late show: | |
| R | WHITEOUT | | | | |
| | daily: | 5:15 | 7:30 | 9:45 | |
| | matinee: | 12:45 | 3:00 | late show: | 12:00 |
| PG | CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS | | | | 3D |
| | daily: | 4:00 | 6:00 | | |
| | matinee: | 12:00 | 2:00 | late show: | |

AT PASEO HERENCIA

| | | | | | |
|--------------|---|-------|------------|------------|------------|
| R | ZOMBIELAND | | | | NEW |
| | daily: | 4:00 | 6:00 | 8:00 | 10:00 |
| | matinee: | 12:00 | 2:00 | late show: | 12:00 |
| PG-13 | SURROGATES | | | | NEW |
| | daily: | 6:30 | 8:45 | | |
| | matinee: | 1:15 | 3:45 | late show: | 11:15 |
| R | JENNIFER'S BODY | | | | |
| | daily: | 4:45 | 7:00 | 9:15 | |
| | matinee: | 12:15 | 2:30 | late show: | 11:30 |
| PG-13 | TYLER PERRY'S I CAN DO BAD ALL BY MYSELF | | | | |
| | daily: | 8:30 | | | |
| | matinee: | | late show: | 11:15 | |
| PG | CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS | | | | 3D |
| | daily: | 4:15 | 6:15 | | |
| | matinee: | 12:15 | 2:15 | late show: | |
| PG-13 | G.I. JOE: THE RISE OF THE COBRA | | | | |
| | daily: | 6:00 | | | |
| | matinee: | 12:30 | 3:30 | late show: | |
| R | FINAL DESTINATION 4 | | | | |
| | daily: | 8:15 | 10:00 | | |
| | matinee: | | late show: | 11:45 | 3D |
| R | WHITEOUT | | | | |
| | daily: | 5:15 | 7:30 | 9:45 | |
| | matinee: | 12:45 | 3:00 | late show: | 12:00 |

Death toll in Indonesia earthquake rises to 777

By IRWAN FIRDAUS,
Associated Press Writer

PADANG, Indonesia — Rescue workers pulled victims, some screaming in pain, from the heavy rubble of buildings felled by a powerful earthquake that killed at least 777 people. The death toll was still expected to rise.

The brunt of Wednesday's 7.6-magnitude earthquake, which originated in the sea off Sumatra island, appeared to have been borne by the city of Padang, where a government official said most the dead came from.

The region was jolted by another powerful earthquake Thursday morning, causing damage but no reported fatalities.

More than 500 buildings including hotels, schools, hospitals and a mall were destroyed or damaged in Padang. Thousands of people were still believed to be trapped in the rubble, said Rustam Pakaya, head of the Health Ministry's crisis center. Workers used backhoes to shift debris.

The government official told The Associated Press that at least 777 people are confirmed to have died in the quake, with about 300 seriously injured. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he is not authorized to speak to the media. He said most of the dead were in Padang.

"Oh God, help me! help me!" Friska Yuniwati, a 30-year-old woman, screamed in pain, as she was carried to an ambulance in downtown Padang. She had been pulled out minutes earlier from the

rubble of a house, her face covered in bruises and eyes shut.

John Lee, a Singaporean guest at the flattened Maryani hotel, was pulled free by rescue workers who heard his cries for help. He had been trapped for 25 hours with a broken leg.

Padang's state-run Djamil Hospital was overwhelmed by the influx of victims and families. Dozens of injured people were being treated under tents outside the hospital, which was itself partly damaged.

President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono pledged to do "everything we can" to help the victims.

"Let's not underestimate (the disaster). Let's be prepared for the worst," Yudhoyono said in Jakarta before flying to Padang, a coastal city of 900,000 and capital of West Sumatra province.

A total of 531 people were confirmed dead and 440 were seriously injured, the Social Affairs Ministry's crisis center said. UNICEF said tens of thousands of people had been made homeless, one third of them children.

"The needs of thousands of children are vast and urgent. They must have access to clean water, shelter," Angela Kearney, the U.N. body's Indonesian chief, said in a statement.

One focus for emergency workers was a collapsed 4-story concrete building in downtown Padang, where 30 children had been taking classes when the quake struck. Four students were found

alive and six bodies were dug from the rubble. Dozens were missing, said Jamil, a volunteer. "It's getting very difficult now to find more victims," he said.

Parents of missing students stayed up all night, waiting for signs of life.

"My daughter's face keeps appearing in my eyes ... my mind. I cannot sleep, I'm waiting here to see her again," a woman who identified herself only as Imelda said, tears rolling down her face. She said her 12-year-old daughter Yolanda was in the school for science lessons.

"She is a good daughter and very smart. I really love her. Please, God help her," she said.

In another building, rescue workers passed a plastic bottle of water through an opening in the rubble to a person trapped underneath.

The president ordered the military to deploy emergency response teams from Jakarta, West Sumatra and North Sumatra provinces. He said the military will provide earth-moving equipment to clear the rubble.

SurfAid, a New Zealand-based medical aid group, said its program director David Lange narrowly escaped death when he fled the Ambacang Hotel minutes before it collapsed.

"People are trapped and screaming for help but they are below huge slabs which will take heavy equipment to move," Lange was quoted as saying in a statement by SurfAid.

"I saw dozens of the biggest buildings collapsed in town.



A man leans on a car crushed by a minaret of a mosque that fell onto it after an earthquake in Padang, West Sumatra, Indonesia, Thursday, Oct. 1, 2009. A second powerful earthquake rocked western Indonesia on Thursday as rescuers struggled to reach survivors of the previous day's quake, which killed more than 500 people and left thousands trapped under collapsed buildings.

(AP Photo/Dita Alangkara)

Most of the damage is concentrated in the commercial center market, which was fully packed," he said.

At least 80 people were missing at the five-story Ambacang Hotel, said Indra, a paramedic who uses only one name.

Terrified residents who spent a restless night, many sleeping outdoors, were jolted by the new quake Thursday morning.

The U.S. Geological Survey said the quake hit about 150 miles (240 kilometers) south of Padang. It damaged 1,100 buildings, including mosques and homes, in the town of Jambi, according to Mayor Hasfiah, who uses only one name like many Indonesians. He said there were no deaths, but dozens of people were injured. Wednesday's quake was so powerful that it caused buildings to sway hundreds of miles (kilometers) away in Malaysia and Singapore. In

Padang, children screamed as thousands of frantic residents fled in cars and motorbikes, honking horns. They feared the quake would trigger a tsunami, but no giant waves struck.

The quake severed roads and cut off power and communications to Padang, and the extent of damage in surrounding areas was still unclear.

Indonesia, a poor, sprawling nation, sits on a major geological fault zone and is frequently hit by earthquakes. The latest quakes were along the same fault line that spawned the 2004 Asian tsunami that killed 230,000 people in a dozen nations.

Geologists said the Indonesia quakes were not related to another deadly quake Tuesday that hit islands in the South Pacific.

Padang's mayor appealed for assistance on Indonesian radio station el-Shinta. □

Beshir pledges free Sudan vote in 2010

KHARTOUM (AFP) — President Omar al-Beshir on Thursday said he supported a "democratic transformation" in Sudan and promised that general elections scheduled for next year would be free and fair.

He spoke after around 20 political parties threatened on Wednesday to boycott the elections -- the first in more than two decades -- unless he implements reforms.

"We affirm our commitment for a democratic transformation and multi-party politics as well as holding general elections without influence and pressure," Beshir told his ruling National Congress Party's general conference.

Wednesday's election boycott threat came at a meeting in Juba in semi-autonomous south Sudan that was not attended by NCP representatives.

Participants in the Juba talks called for "amendment of all laws related to freedoms and democratic transformation" to bring them into line with the interim constitution in Africa's largest nation.

In the "Juba declaration for dialogue and national consensus," agreed after five days of talks, the party leaders said they will only take part in planned presidential, parliamentary and regional elections if the relevant laws are amended by the end of November. The elections, scheduled for next April, would be the first since 1986.

In 2005, after 21 years of north-south civil war, the south's Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and the NCP signed a Comprehensive Peace Agreement including the interim constitution.

"We announce our respect for the treaties we have signed, including those relating to the next elections... and the referendum in the south," Beshir said on Thursday, without elaborating.

The party leaders meeting in Juba also backed the idea of a simple majority -- 50 percent plus one vote -- as the threshold for south Sudan gaining independence in a referendum scheduled for January 2011.

Beshir's party wants a 75 percent threshold in the referendum. □

Somalia: 12 die as rival Islamist groups fight



Islamic Party fighters travel on a pickup van after an exercise in Afgoye, south of Mogadishu, Thursday, Oct. 1, 2009. Fighting between rival Islamist factions over control of a key Somali port city killed at least five people on Thursday, residents and medical staff said, in the first concrete sign of a major split in the Islamist alliance threatening the fragile U.N.-backed government.

(AP Photo/Farah Abdi Warsameh)

By **MOHAMED OLAD HASSAN**,
Associated Press Writer

MOGADISHU, Somalia — Fighting between rival Islamist factions on Thursday over control of a key Somali port city killed at least 12 people,

most of them combatants, said witnesses and medical staff. The fighting is the first concrete sign of a major split in the Islamist alliance that poses the main threat to Somalia's fragile U.N.-backed government.

The fighting broke out early Thursday morning in five areas of Kismayo, a port that is Somalia's third largest town and the stronghold of two powerful militant groups. Residents said late Thursday that battles between al-Shabab and Hizbul Islam, which means "Islamic Party," had almost ended, with al-Shabab appearing to be in control of much of Kismayo.

Osman Jibril, a nurse at Kismayo Hospital, said the death toll had risen to 12 and that more than 70 wounded people had been admitted to the hospital. He said 10 of the dead were combatants and most of the wounded were also fighters.

Kismayo resident Abdinasir Igal said al-Shabab militiamen patrolled the town center after the battle, shouting from their vehicles that residents should remain calm.

Sheik Abdullahi Dahir, who lives in the northern part of Kismayo, said many fighters

of the Islamic Party had converged in that part of town. Sporadic gunfire could be heard there late Thursday, said Dahir, who saw some of the fighting from the rooftop of his two-level house.

Sheik Ismail Adow, a spokesman for the Islamic Party, said the clashes began when his fighters came under attack by members of al-Shabab.

Kismayo is around 310 miles (500 kilometers) south of the capital of Mogadishu and taxes collected from shipping are a major revenue source for Islamic militants.

An al-Shabab spokesman, Sheik Ali Mohamoud Rage, said his group was not targeting the Islamic Party but one of its top commanders in southern Somalia, he said, "who opposes jihad in Somalia."

Last month, members of al-Shabab vowed allegiance to al-Qaida. The Somali group has been designated by the U.S. State Department as a

terrorist organization.

Al-Shabab and the Islamic Party used to jointly control Kismayo but last week al-Shabab declared themselves the sole administrators. The two sides began swapping insults in the local media and massing fighters on the outskirts of town.

Information Minister Dahir Mohamoud Geelle said the apparent split within the Islamic alliance did not benefit the government.

"Their division is meaningless to the government because fighting between them can only cause the loss of civilian lives," Geelle told The Associated Press.

Somalia's government, which itself suffers from splits and defections, only controls a few blocks of Mogadishu with the help of around 5,000 African Union peacekeepers. Al-Shabab launched a suicide attack on the peacekeepers earlier this month, killing 21 people. □



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Communist China marks 60 years with tanks, kitsch

By **CHRISTOPHER BODEEN,**

Associated Press Writer

BEIJING — Jets, tanks and missile-toting trucks thundered through Beijing on Thursday in a show of military muscle to celebrate six decades of communist rule and China's transformation from a war-battered regional player into global economic superpower. Most people in the capital could only watch the elaborate ceremony for the founding of the People's Republic unfold on national television, as tight security excluded ordinary people from getting

near the parade route through Tiananmen Square.

Precisely choreographed, the two-and-half-hour event hewed closely to tradition. President Hu Jintao, in a Mao jacket instead of a business suit, rode in an open-top Red Flag limousine to review the thousands of troops. A parade of kitschy floats, flanked by more than 100,000 people, lauded the communist revolution and the Beijing Olympics.

A female militia in red miniskirts and shiny white boots added a jolt of color to the sea of fatigues — and

showcased efforts by the armed forces to be more inclusive.

Even the weather cooperated, after the government's aggressive cloud-seeding produced overnight showers to disperse smog and bring in blue skies.

"The message that is intended is: 'We are modern, we are Chinese, we are great, we are fantastic, and we all do it because of the great leadership of the Communist Party,'" said Steve Tsang, a China politics expert at Oxford University.

The most novel aspect was the weaponry, more than had been shown before and most of which was domestically produced: dozens of fighter jets and hundreds of tanks, artillery and trucks carrying long-range, nuclear-capable missiles.

"On this joyful and solemn occasion, all the peoples across the nation feel extremely proud for the progress and development of the motherland and have full confidence in the bright prospects for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation," Hu said in a short speech standing atop Tiananmen gate with the rest of the collective leadership looking on.

Behind the celebrations is the tremendous change of fortunes China has experienced. A poor country that was weak internationally when the communists took over on Oct. 1, 1949, China has become the world's third-largest economy and a power whose input the U.S. seeks to solve the global economic crisis and Iran's nuclear challenge.

China is now the world's largest auto market and has more Internet and mobile phone users than anywhere else.

Virtually all Chinese families now have at least one television and, in the cities, a washing machine — rare items three decades ago. Some 15 million families own private cars, and many Chinese also own their own homes.

The parade floats showcased such material gains by toting models of high-speed trains, giant computers, cars and bundles of wheat and rice



Fireworks explode over Tiananmen Square during an evening performance to mark the 60th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, in Beijing October 1, 2009.

REUTERS/Jason Lee (CHINA POLITICS ANNIVERSARY)

in the wake of the military's display.

Unmentioned during the event and crescendo of state media hype in recent weeks were the ruinous campaigns of revolutionary leader Mao Zedong that left tens of millions dead — as well as the country's current challenges: a widening gap between rich and poor, rampant corruption, severe pollution and ethnic uprisings in the western areas of Tibet and predominantly Muslim Xinjiang.

An evening gala on Tiananmen Square later Thursday featured thousands of performers singing and dancing for nearly two hours while dramatic bursts of multicolored fireworks erupted in the background. Driving home the party's message of harmony and ethnic unity, several songs were about the steadily improving and happy lives of Tibetans, ethnic Muslims and other minorities under communist rule.

The show, like the opening ceremony for the Beijing Olympics a year ago, was choreographed by film director Zhang Yimou.

As part of the night's finale, Hu and other top leaders descended from their VIP platform onto the square, holding hands and singing "Ode To The Motherland" along with the artists.

While the Olympics were meant to mark China's arrival on the world stage, both the parade and the gala squarely aimed to please a domestic audience with a strong emphasis on popular Chinese culture and appearances by national heroes, such as

performing artists, astronauts and athletes.

The strategy seemed to work, with people gathering on side streets to get a glimpse of the passing parade or watching from home.

"China's power makes us proud. Over the span of 60 years, China has developed so rapidly," said retiree Wang Shumin, standing in a back alley watching the parade on TV through a shop window. "China is now powerful and has a position on the world stage."

But in Hong Kong, which has Western-style civil liberties as part of its special semiautonomous status, hundreds of people protested Thursday, denouncing China's human rights record during 60 years of communist rule.

About 200 people marched through the downtown financial district, chanting, "We want human rights. We don't want a sanitized National Day."

Tibetans also staged protested outside Chinese embassies in India and Nepal.

Minxin Pei, a professor of government at Claremont McKenna College in California, said the event continues a strategy deployed since the military crushed the Tiananmen democracy movement in 1989: "a one-party state that uses its economic success to bolster its legitimacy in any way conceivable, including a Soviet-style military parade." He said the money would have been better spent on scholarships for students in impoverished rural areas. □



A man gets his hands disinfected after bringing a cholera patient to a medical center. Nine people died and several others were hospitalised this week following a cholera outbreak in Nigeria's northern Taraba State, bringing the death toll in the region to 97, an official said Thursday.

(AFP/File/Seyllou)

Cholera spreads in northern Nigeria as death toll hits 97

KANO, Nigeria (AFP) — Nine people died and several others were hospitalised this week following a cholera outbreak in Nigeria's northern Taraba State, bringing the death toll in the region to 97, an official said Thursday.

"We have recorded cases of cholera here in Jalingo (the capital) in the past two days in which nine people have died and several others hospitalised at the State Specialist Hospital," the state health commissioner, Muhammad Bose, told AFP.

"I can't give exact figures of those hospitalised because we are still collating the number of cases but we have sent health personnel and drugs to the three affected neighbourhoods in the metropolis," Bose said by telephone from Jalingo.

On Wednesday health officials in Jigawa State -- also in the region -- announced the death of 11 people following an outbreak of cholera in Bashuri village where 400 cases emerged in under a fortnight.

Health officials were still investigating the cause of the outbreak, Bose said. Cholera has claimed 77 lives in recent weeks in Adamawa State, leaving nearly 1,000 people hospitalised.

"At the moment we have recorded 77 deaths and 934 cases in the cholera outbreak," said Adamawa information commissioner Musa Bubakari by telephone from Yola, the state capital, which shares border with Taraba state. □

SPORTS

Aruba TODAY



It's the Oprah Winfrey show, Olympic style

COPENHAGEN - Want a picture with Oprah? She's holding court in the restaurant. Interested in talking to a Dream Teamer or a Perfect 10? David Robinson and Nadia Comaneci are roaming the halls. How about a meeting with the first lady? If you're an International Olympic Committee member, it's a good bet Michelle Obama could work you in.

With the hours dwindling before the 2016 games are awarded, Chicago leaders were doing another hard sell Thursday, trying to win over few more voters and hold onto those who already like them.

"Everybody is thinking positively about their own city," said Anita DeFrantz, one of the United States' two IOC members. "The question is, can anybody make a better case for a better city?"

Chicago is considered a favorite going into

Friday's IOC vote, but plenty of front-runner cities have wound up watching someone else celebrate. Rio de Janeiro has a compelling argument, asking the IOC to take the games to South America for the first time while Madrid has the backing of former IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch, still a powerful figure.

And Tokyo has pushed the safety and financial security of its proposal. "There are four great choices," Robinson said. "Obviously, we're here to talk about the merits of Chicago."

And talking they were. The first lady arrived Wednesday and has spent much of her time meeting one-on-one with IOC members in a private suite at the official hotel. The sit-downs are brief but give her an opportunity to share her story—she grew up on the city's South Side, near where most of the venues



would be—and assure IOC members that Chicago is sincere about its desire to use the Olympics to inspire children and transform their lives.

It's the same message she gave Wednesday night at a dinner with Chicago supporters.

"I was moved," Winfrey said. "And they already had

my vote." While the first lady was closeted away, Chicago dispatched its big names to drum up support. As word spread that Winfrey would be arriving at the main hotel, the lobby filled and even IOC members seemed eager to catch a glimpse of the TV star. She couldn't take more than a step or two

without someone snapping a photo—even the secretary of Carlos Arthur Nuzman, head of Rio's bid, who was there to take a photo for a friend posing with Winfrey. □



Philadelphia Phillies have sights set on repeating

PHILADELPHIA —They poured champagne and beer, lit victory cigars and toasted their beloved former broadcaster, enjoying a moment that seemed inevitable all season.

Celebrations never get old, so the Philadelphia Phillies partied away after clinching their third straight NL East crown on Wednesday night. Players ran around the clubhouse and on the field, soaking each other with bubbly, spraying fans and anyone else in sight.

Everyone from mainstays Ryan Howard(notes), Chase Utley(notes) and Jimmy Rollins(notes) to newcomers Raul Ibanez(notes), Cliff Lee(notes) and Pedro Martinez(notes) relished the accomplishment. But no one is satisfied. Getting to the postseason is only the first step

and everyone in the organization knows it. Expectations are much higher when you're the defending World Series champions. The goal is repeating.

"I want to say you get used to this, but every one is different and special," All-Star outfielder Jayson Werth(notes) said. "We are going to enjoy this moment, but know where we still have to go."

Unlike the two previous years when Philadelphia had to overcome late-season deficits and didn't clinch until the final weekend, this division championship was hardly in doubt. The Phillies moved into first place for good on May 30 and had a comfortable lead throughout the season. But that didn't make it any easier, especially for

a team whose pitching staff has been riddled with injuries and plagued by inconsistency.

"It's been rougher this year," Rollins said. "Everyone was gunning for us. The last couple years, we were kind of the dark horse. We were right there, but we were never in the lead. We were trailing and catching up at the end. But winning a championship, everyone is gunning for us. We stood up to the test in the regular season, and we'll stand up to the test in the postseason."

The Phillies are trying to become the first repeat champions since the New York Yankees won three straight World Series from 1998-2000. The Cincinnati Reds were the last NL team to win two in a row in 1975-76. □

Nike: No 'contractual relationship' with Vick

NEW YORK —Nike said Thursday it does not have a "contractual relationship" with Michael Vick(notes), a day after the quarterback's agent announced a deal with the manufacturer.

In a statement released Thursday morning, Nike

said it has "agreed to supply product to Michael Vick as we do a number of athletes who are not under contract with Nike."

On Wednesday, Michael Principe, the managing director of BEST, the agency that represents Vick,



announced the Philadelphia Eagles player had a new deal with Nike during a panel discussion at the Sports Sponsorship Symposium.

"He actually just became a Nike client," Principe said Wednesday.

"He has a new deal with Nike that we're all very pleased about."

Principe declined comment Thursday.

Vick's agent, Joel Segal, said later Wednesday that Vick looked forward to continuing his relationship with Nike, adding that the player and company had agreed not to release terms of the deal.

Segal did not immediately

return a call for comment Thursday.

Nike had initially declined comment Wednesday night. Nike, which signed Vick as a rookie in 2001, terminated his contract in August 2007 after he filed a plea agreement admitting his involvement in a dogfighting ring. □

Benefit raises \$8M for Agassi school in Vegas

LAS VEGAS—A weekend benefit concert raised nearly \$8 million to support retired tennis star Andre Agassi's public charter school in Las Vegas.

Officials say Agassi's foundation, used to support the Andre Agassi College Preparatory Academy, also received a pledge of \$7.5 million over five years from the Engelstad Family Foundation.

The Saturday concert at the Wynn Las Vegas casino featured comedian Dane Cook, rock band Daughtry, country musician Tim McGraw and R&B singer Brian McKnight.

Officials say the \$7.5 million gift will be used to establish a campaign to try to raise student funding in Nevada.

The K-12 school uses the concert funds for its operating budget. The school has roughly 600 students and graduated its first high school seniors this year. □

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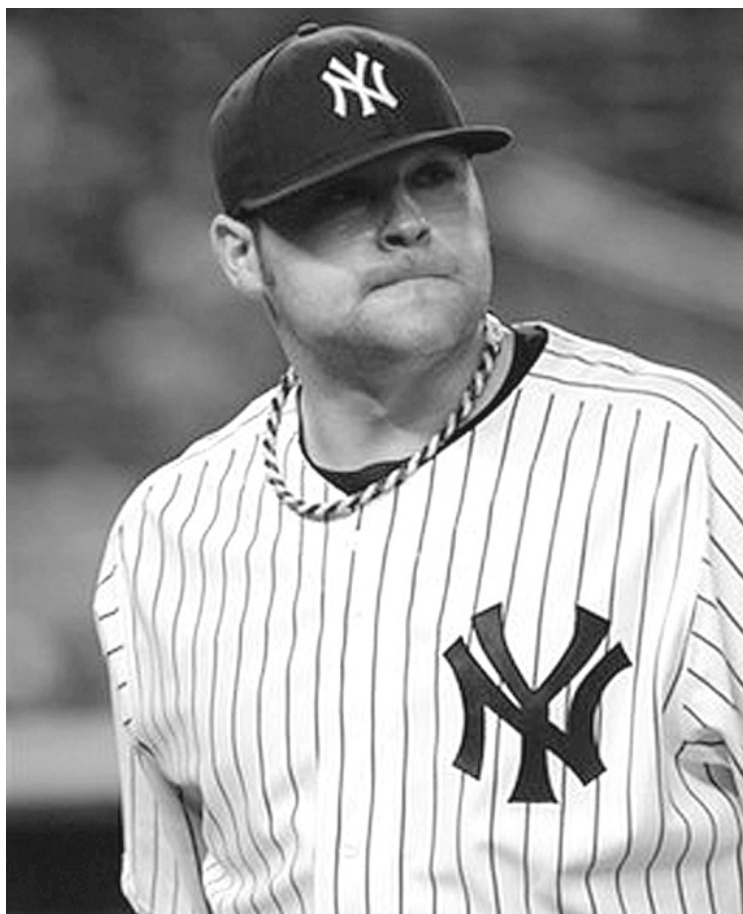
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Joba Chamberlain could be off Yankees' postseason roster

NEW YORK- New York Yankees starter Joba Chamberlain(notes) had a horrendous performance against one of the worst teams in the league last night. He threw 91 pitches in 3.2 innings of work against the Kansas City Royals in a 4-3 loss. Chamberlain certainly won't be a starter in the American League Division Series, where the Yanks will use C.C. Sabathia, Andy Pettitte, and A.J. Burnett . While Chamberlain has obviously worked out of the bullpen before, it isn't clear if there is room in the reliever ranks for him, either, according to the New York Daily News. "If they want me to fold towels, I'll fold towels," Chamberlain told the paper. "I don't really care. Whatever they see fit, I want to help this team win in any role that I'm in." If manager Joe Girardi doesn't see some evidence of the old fist-pumping Chamberlain soon enough, he could be relegated to towel folding. □



Randy Johnson will take his time deciding on future

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)— Randy Johnson(notes) will take his time deciding whether to pitch next year. The 303-game winner said Thursday there's no rush and said health and his ability to start again could play a role. The Big Unit, who turned 46 last month, has been relegated to relief late this season for the San Francisco Giants following two-plus months on the disabled list with a shoulder injury. "There's no real sense of urgency," Johnson said. "I'm going to go home and do what everybody else does." Johnson, who has 4,873 strikeouts, is 8-6 with a 4.98 ERA in 17 starts and three relief outings—and he'd like to pitch one more time before the season ends. On June 4 at Washington, the 6-foot-10 left-hander became the 24th player in major league history with 300 wins. He joined the Giants in his native Bay Area this season to try to help the team reach the playoffs, but San Francisco will miss the postseason for the sixth straight year after making a run at the NL wild card before recently falling out of contention. Johnson spent July 6-Sept. 16 on the disabled list with a strained left shoulder that also had a tear in the rotator cuff. As he was working his way back, the five-time Cy Young Award winner acknowledged that pitching more than five innings and being effective as a starter would be tough at

this stage. He came out of a game July 5 against the Houston Astros with the injury, his first serious shoulder problem during his career. He felt something in his arm on a swing during that start but initially tried to pitch through it. He then left the game after committing a throwing error in the top of the fourth. This marked the 10th DL stint of Johnson's career. He has had four knee operations and three back surgeries and worked his way back. Johnson has repeatedly acknowledged this could be his final season and said he'll make his decision known—probably in Arizona. He lives in the Phoenix area after spending eight of his previous 10 seasons with the Diamondbacks, interrupted by a rocky two-year stint with the New York Yankees in 2005 and '06. "You'll read about it," he said. □

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Colombia aplaza compra de tanques por 28 millones de dólares

BOGOTA (Reuters) - Colombia anunció el jueves que aplazó una compra de tanques por 28 millones de dólares y que destinará esos recursos a pagar una bonificación especial a 22.000 soldados profesionales que la dejaron de recibir hace dos meses por falta de presupuesto y vacíos legales.

Ante el retraso en el pago de la bonificación, cientos de efectivos del Ejército y de la Infantería de Marina amenazaron con renunciar, lo que hubiera colocado en riesgo la ofensiva del Gobierno contra las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC), según fuentes de seguridad.

El ministro de Defensa, Gabriel Silva, dijo que para el Gobierno es prioritario el bienestar de los efectivos de las Fuerzas Militares que mantienen una ofensiva contra la guerrilla izquierdista, otros grupos armados ilegales y el narcotráfico.

“Los recursos necesarios para darle continuidad a este subsidio procederán,

Brasil:

Senador pide rechazar a Venezuela en Mercosur

BRASILIA (AP) - El legislador opositor Tasso Jereissati pidió el jueves al Senado brasileño rechazar la entrada de Venezuela al Mercosur tras afirmar que el presidente Hugo Chávez “está implantando un régimen totalitario”.

Jereissati, relator de la comisión de relaciones exteriores del Senado que discute el ingreso venezolano al Mercosur, reconoció que la presencia de ese país tendría ventajas económicas para los miembros del bloque, pero advirtió que esos beneficios no deben sobreponerse a los criterios políticos.

“Entendemos que no debe ser aprobada la adhesión de Venezuela al Mercosur”, dijo el senador, tras afirmar que Chávez muestra “poco respeto” por los tratados internacionales.

Su informe debía ser votado por la comisión de relaciones exteriores antes de ir al plenario del Senado, pero la votación fue aplazada al 29 de octubre por petición de otros legisladores que pidieron tiempo para estudiarlo. El líder oficialista en el Senado, Romero Jucá, anunció que presentará una opinión alternativa favorable al ingreso de Venezuela a la unión aduanera del Mercosur.

Jereissati, del opositor Partido de la Social Democracia Brasileña (PSDB), reconoció que no se puede cuestionar las elecciones que llevaron al poder a Chávez pero advirtió que “no hay legitimidad en el proceso electoral como un todo”.



Foto de archivo del presidente colombiano, Alvaro Uribe (izquierda en la imagen), junto a su ministro de Defensa, Gabriel Silva, durante la ceremonia de juramento al cargo de este último en una base militar del Bogotá, 7 ago 2009. Colombia anunció el jueves que aplazó una compra de tanques por 28 millones de dólares y que destinará esos recursos a pagar una bonificación especial a 22.000 soldados profesionales que la dejaron de recibir hace dos meses por falta de presupuesto y vacíos legales. REUTERS/Cesar Carrion/ Presidency Handout

primordialmente, según lo dispuesto por el Ministerio de Defensa, del aplazamiento en la adquisición de tanques de guerra”, aseguró el funcionario a periodistas.

“Con esta decisión, se ratifica y de sus familias, sobre la política de darle prioridad otras prioridades”, explicó. al bienestar de los soldados Silva aclaró que la compra

de los tanques de guerra no se suspenderá y que pese al aplazamiento se buscarán los recursos para una futura adquisición destinada a garantizar la seguridad interna del país y no a una carrera armamentista.

“Esto es un aplazamiento que corresponde a las prioridades y a la doctrina que tenemos, pero no quiere decir que renunciamos a la estrategia y a la política de abandonar nuestras capacidades disuasivas dentro de los límites más estrictos y rigurosos de Colombia, que a diferencia de otros países no hace parte de la carrera armamentista”, aseguró. Las Fuerzas Armadas de Colombia cuentan en la actualidad con más de 438.000 efectivos, la mayoría incorporada al Ejército que persigue a la guerrilla en apartadas zonas montañosas y selváticas y a la Policía Nacional, encargada de garantizar la seguridad en las ciudades. □

Perú rechaza envío observadores a ejercicio militar en Chile

LIMA (Reuters) - Perú rechazó el jueves la invitación de Chile para que envíe observadores a un ejercicio militar en el país vecino, el cual considera poco adecuado en momentos en que ambas naciones mantienen un litigio por sus límites marítimos en una corte de justicia internacional.

Con la invitación, Santiago buscaba poner paños fríos a una anterior petición peruana de suspender las maniobras militares de octubre en el norte de Chile y a las que asistirán como observadores fuerzas armadas de Estados Unidos, Brasil, Argentina y Francia.

“El ministro (y jefe del gabinete peruano, Javier) Velásquez ha dicho la palabra del Gobierno: es innecesario”, dijo el canciller José Antonio García Belaunde a periodistas ante la pregunta sobre si Perú iba a aceptar la oferta. “El libreto (del operativo castrense), tal como está definido y propuesto y de que

se trata, no es muy feliz que digamos, pero maniobras se hacen en todos los países”, acotó. En el ejercicio chileno se prevé hacer una simulación de un país que es invadido por un enemigo -una nación ficticia- que no cumple con tratados internacionales, según la prensa local. Hace unos días, el ministro de Defensa peruano, Rafael Rey, aseguró que el ejercicio militar programado en las cercanías de la ciudad norteña de Antofagasta del país vecino considera a Perú como un país invasor al territorio chileno. Perú presentó en el 2008 ante la Corte Internacional de La Haya una demanda en la cual busca delimitar su frontera marítima con Chile, cuyo Gobierno considera que ya fue fijada hace más de medio siglo cuando se suscribieron dos acuerdos. Pero, para Lima, esos acuerdos sólo fueron pactos para regular las faenas pesqueras en la zona □



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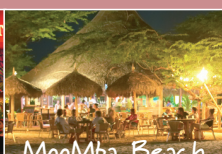
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